

Recreation Center

S.B. Historical Society



# EDWARD P. RIPLEY AND HIS FRIENDS FROM CHICAGO

By David F. Myrick\*

Because this portion of the Santa Ynez Range is one of the few mountain chains in the Western hemisphere running on an east-west axis close to an ocean, Santa Barbara enjoys a temperate climate which has drawn people from all over the world. If one could scan the hotel registers of the last century, the names of most people prominent in the arts, business and government of this country would be found.

Early travelers came to Santa Barbara by taking the overland train to San Francisco, then the steamer to Santa Barbara and staying at the Arlington (opened in 1876), San Marcos or one of the smaller hotels. Commencing with 1887, Southern Pacific trains brought people from Los Angeles and San Francisco via Saugus to spend their vacations here. As the rail trip to and from San Francisco was circuitous, steamers continued to handle a large portion of the traffic until the direct line to San Francisco was opened in 1901. Santa Barbara then was on the main line of the Southern Pacific; trains such as the *Sunset Limited*, *Shoreline Limited*, *Seashore Express*, *Daylight Limited*, *Lark* and *Padre* were among the name trains serving the community.

People came to Santa Barbara for health reasons and for the mild winters. Once here, they delighted in writing letters to their home-town newspapers telling their shivering friends about the balmy winter days in Santa Barbara. This, in turn, brought more people who then wrote more letters to their friends and the process repeated itself again and again.

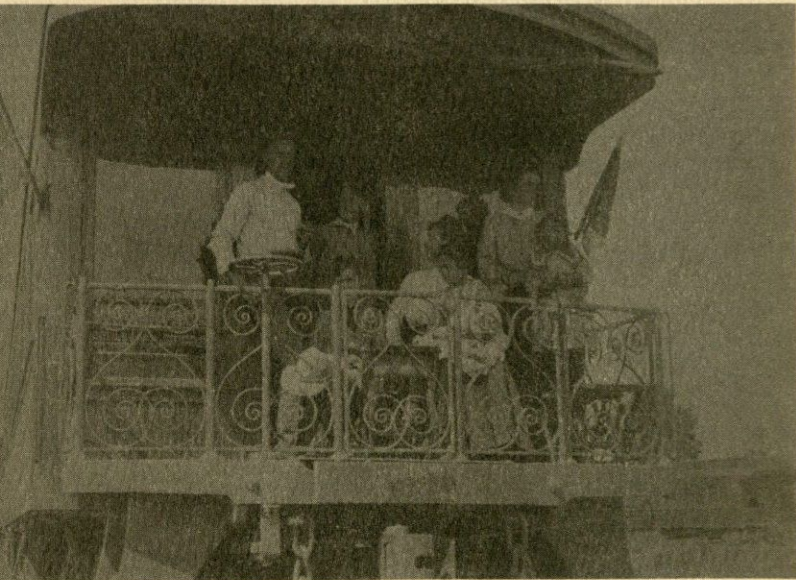
With the opening of the railroad, many officials of other lines enjoying professional courtesies—"passes" in the vernacular—found their way to Santa Barbara. Often these passes entitled them to move in their business cars but some did not stop there. George Gould, son of the famous robber barron Jay Gould, came in his own private train as did the Vanderbilts and others.

The coming of the railroad in 1887 marked the culmination of a long period of disappointments and the beginning of frustrations. Local citizens were disappointed because of various railroad promoters who were long on promises but short on cash. Several times in the 1870s Santa Barbara residents fully expected to hear locomotives whistling at crossings and then the dream would vanish. The fourteen-year span between 1887 and the opening of the line to San Francisco was one of frustrations.

At the time Southern Pacific built into Santa Barbara and on to Ellwood, there were other railroad officials eyeing the community. Several preliminary surveys were made from the Los Angeles area, some along the shore line while other surveyors set their transits in Santa Paula, Nordhoff in the Ojai Valley, then over Casitas Pass and through Montecito to Santa Barbara. At times, Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad officials appeared in town, exchanged pleasantries with reporters and civic leaders and then departed without disclosing the real reasons for their visit. Perhaps the Santa Fe might have built into Santa Barbara as part of its Southern California network but, because of growing financial difficulties, the Santa Fe never came closer than Redondo Beach.

However, along with other railroads, it maintained a traffic office on State Street and enjoyed a loyal following because, until 1902, it had the only direct line from Southern California to Chicago.





... party on his private car

Mrs. J. Rock

### Edward Payson Ripley

Though Santa Fe rails never came to Santa Barbara, its president, E.P. Ripley, came many times and built his winter home here. Furthermore, he induced several Chicago friends and associates to establish homes here.

Born in Dorchester, Massachusetts, in 1845, Ripley turned away from his father's grocery business to enter railway service in the Boston office of the traffic department of the Burlington Railroad. Ripley enjoyed selling railroad services and was considered one of the best informed traffic men in the country. He went up the Burlington ladder to become traffic manager and then general manager in 1888. A change in corporate policy in 1890 caused him to switch to the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway as Third Vice President (traffic). Ripley was prominent in the road section of the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. The men behind Santa Fe, emerging from bankruptcy in December 1895, chose E.P. Ripley to be president of the reorganized road, a position he held until January 1, 1920, longer than anyone else.

In 1871 he married Frances E. Harding, also of Dorchester, and they had two sons and two daughters.

Ripley was vice president of the Milwaukee when he first visited Santa Barbara in March 1894. With him was his wife and Mrs. Edward A. Driver, a Riverside, Illinois, friend and neighbor. (Both men had been mayor of Riverside at one time). When the Ripley family came two years later, they stayed at Baxter Terrace while E.P. Ripley, the new president, was learning about the Santa Fe. Baxter Terrace, at the northwest corner of Micheltorena and Bath Streets, (still standing) was a popular residential hotel for winter visitors.

When the Ripleys arrived in Santa Barbara in March 1900, there were ten people in the private car, including Mr. and Mrs. Driver, and Mr. and Mrs. Dan Richardson. Initially, this group contemplated a three-week visit, but it was so enjoyable that they added another three weeks to their time in Santa Barbara.



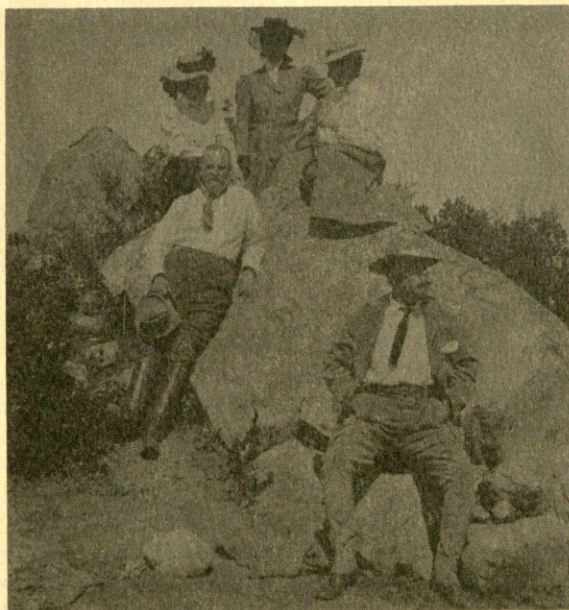
Moving to one of the cottages of the Santa Barbara Country Club (now the site of the Biltmore Hotel), Ripley enjoyed playing golf on the short course, one of the first in California.

The following year the family occupied one of the houses along Crocker Row on upper Garden Street while E.P. Ripley led the Chicago Commercial Club on a tour of California. In subsequent years, the Ripleys rented the Redington house on Pedregosa Street and the Chapman house on Anacapa Street.

Meanwhile, Mr. and Mrs. Dan Richardson returned to Santa Barbara and in 1901 purchased three parcels near the upper end of Cold Springs Road where they built a "cottage" which he called Piranhurst. Later this property passed into the hands of Henry Bothin. The Driver family, also introduced to Santa Barbara by Ripley, rented the Hayne house (Las Tejas) when they came for the winter and spring of 1902. The next year the Drivers bought the home of the late Judge E.B. Hall on Hot Springs Avenue and established their home in Montecito.

By this time, the Santa Fe Railway was progressing handsomely and Ripley was able to extend his winter residency in Santa Barbara. With the exchange of telegrams—always coded when discussing confidential matters—Ripley kept in close touch with his Chicago office.

Other railroad executives visited Santa Barbara and, of course, called on E.P. Ripley who had earned high respect in the industry. Among them were E.H. Harriman of the Union Pacific-Southern Pacific and Ransom R. Cable of the Rock Island. Harriman had considered a winter home in Hope Ranch before he died and Cable's son, also a railroad president, lived on Pedregosa Street for many years.



Ripley and friends on La Cumbre, 1908

Mrs. J. Rock

Ripley enjoyed playing golf at the Santa Barbara Country Club; he won a handicap tournament in 1907. In those days, people spent more time hiking and riding in the Santa Ynez mountains, using the Chamber of Commerce trail to La Cumbre Peak. The Ripleys and the Drivers were among those making this climb.





Ripley's home

Mrs. J. Rock

### Mr. Ripley Builds a House

More and more, Ripley found the community to his liking. In April 1904, he bought a lot at the northwest corner of Pedregosa and Garden Streets and engaged local architect Francis W. Wilson to prepare plans for a three-story house; later Wilson drew plans for a series of Santa Fe Railway stations. Early in 1905 the house was ready for the Ripley family at a cost of all of \$15,000. Across Garden Street was *El Nido*, the home of Mrs. Charles H. Hopkins, the mother of Prynce Hopkins.

The friendship between the Drivers and the Ripleys continued in California; in 1909 Mrs. E.A. Driver, Mrs. John Driver, her daughter-in-law, and Mrs. Ripley held a large reception at the Ripley home at 229 East Pedregosa Street.

After visiting Santa Barbara several times, another Ripley associate from Chicago became a property owner. Walter E. Hodges, a Santa Fe vice president, bought a 43-acre tract in Montecito in 1913 from Lombard Conklin. Located on the east side of San Ysidro Road and north of East Valley Road, the Hodges spent winter months there and returned to their home in Riverside, Illinois, for the summer. Hodges contemplated building a larger home but, instead of Montecito, he chose upper Santa Barbara Street as the site for his grand house. Completed in 1921, the mansion at 2112 Santa Barbara Street has been the headquarters of the Fielding Institute since December, 1983. In Montecito, the tract has been subdivided; Hodges Lane bisects the former lemon orchard.

With his second home established, Ripley began to demonstrate an even greater interest in the community. In April, 1911, he purchased the George S. Edwards 70-acre ranch at the northeast corner of Hollister Avenue and the old San Marcos Pass Road. Edwards, president of The Commercial Bank and a former mayor of Santa Barbara, had raised fine blooded horses at the ranch with John Troup in charge. The sale was arranged by Francis H. Lingham, a real-estate broker of long standing, who had handled rentals and other business matters for E.P. Ripley for some years. Following the transaction, Lingham became ranch manager and spent most of his time there after a new house was built for him. He continued to maintain a home on Bath Street, as his wife retained her interest in a millinery store.



## EDWARD P. RIPLEY

In April, 1914, family friends were "surprised" when Alice, one of the Ripley girls, married Schuyler Montgomery Coe of New York and Chicago. He, too, took an interest in the area; two years after his marriage, he bought a 21-acre tract in Montecito from Henry W. deForest who later headed Southern Pacific and whose brother, Lockwood deForest, Sr. was an eminent artist. Coe sold this land in December 1917; eventually it was added to Riven Rock of the McCormick estate. The Coes preferred to stay with her parents when visiting Santa Barbara and, after the death of her husband, Mrs. Coe returned to the Pedregosa Street home in 1922 to live until she died in 1957. The house was demolished the next year and the property was subdivided.

Ripley had been a member of the Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce for some years when he was elected a director in February, 1918. It was that same month that the Garden Club met at the Ripleys' home. The Ripleys were well liked in Santa Barbara; this writer recalls hearing nothing but friendly and admirable remarks made about them. (Newspaper men remembered E. P. Ripley's genuine sincerity and his willingness to assist them in gathering information). Therefore, it was not surprising that Ripley was elected president of the Museum of Comparative Oology in Mission Canyon in January, 1919; the name was soon changed to the Museum of Natural History.

But time began to take its toll. While in Chicago in September 1919, Ripley underwent two operations and though he was recovering nicely, he resigned his position with the Santa Fe Railway as of the first day of 1920. On December 11, 1919, Edward and Frances Ripley returned to their home in Santa Barbara and his condition was not considered serious until the end of January when he grew weaker. Although Ripley was up and around the house in the morning, he suffered a relapse and died in the afternoon on February 4, 1920.

After his death, an old Santa Barbara friend, Thomas Chester, recalled: "Mr. Ripley used to be fond of carriage riding. Many times we have gone on rides together. The roads were not then the best in the land and often we would drive through the mud after a hard rain. I remember particularly one trip to the Santa Barbara Country Club and through Montecito. The mud was up to the hubs of the carriage, but Mr. Ripley didn't mind. He seemed to enjoy it fully. He was fond of golf and of simple amusements. With all his success, he met everyone on a common footing."



## RECREATION CENTER AND MARGARET BAYLOR INN

By Pamela Post\*

The development of the Recreation Center and its auxiliary facility, the Margaret Baylor Inn, was a reflection of the social reform movement characteristic of the time. During the late nineteenth century a progressive reaction emerged against the then current national policy of *laissez-faire* and indifference to social suffering. People who espoused this progressive philosophy viewed the doctrine of "survival of the fittest" as abhorrent.

A more humanistic approach as advocated by one such progressive leader, Jane Addams, was to see potential in all people. Addams' remedy was to establish settlement houses where programs stressing self-expression through recreational activities would enlarge the learning experiences of the participants and help to bolster individual self-worth.

Shortly after Addams' Hull House was founded in Chicago in 1889, settlement houses were launched successfully in other parts of the country. At the turn of the century, progressive-minded citizens of Santa Barbara were inspired to establish their own settlement movement, the result of which culminated in the building of the Recreation Center in 1914.

### The Center's Location

Recreation Center, built under the auspices of the Neighborhood House Association, and located at 100 East Carrillo Street, occupies a portion of land that once lay outside the northern-most defense walls of the Royal Presidio of Santa Barbara.<sup>1</sup> The property remained undeveloped throughout most of the nineteenth century, until 1886, when parts of the land were subdivided, and that portion of the area now occupied by Recreation Center and Margaret Baylor Inn (presently the Lobero Building) was sold to W.K. Winchester.<sup>2</sup>

In 1902, the Winchester site was purchased by the Santa Barbara Natural History Society. The land was purchased in order to expand the Society's smaller facilities elsewhere in the city. At the time of this sale, the only dwelling on the site was a Spanish-period adobe known as the "Historic Adobe," which the Society used to house the artifacts of its Natural History Museum.<sup>3</sup>

In 1913, the Society, having incurred debts from street improvements, decided to sell a portion of its undeveloped property to satisfy the notes. During this same period the Neighborhood House Association was looking for a place to build a recreation center. In May, 1913, negotiations were completed and the corner property owned by the Society was sold to the Association.<sup>4</sup>

The Neighborhood House Association, a privately endowed group, evolved from an earlier organization known as the Young Peoples' Club Association (YPCA).<sup>5</sup> Commonly referred to as the "Boys' Club," the YPCA was founded October 1, 1907, and first was located at 135 East Haley Street.<sup>6</sup> This organization, in turn, was a successor to Associated Charities, incorporated in 1901. The initial purpose of the club was to provide recreational activities for the children of Santa Barbara. The activities were furnished free of charge through private donations. Since the Association was called the "Boys' Club," yet conducted girls' activities as well, it was decided to change the name to one more appropriate for an organization serving both sexes. As a result, on November 9, 1908, the name was officially changed to the Santa Barbara Neighborhood House Association.

## RECREATION CENTER AND MARGARET BAYLOR INN

Margaret Baylor

In 1910, the Board of Directors of the Association hired Margaret Baylor to serve as the superintendent of the Neighborhood House. Baylor's interest and background in settlement work led her to develop Santa Barbara's Neighborhood House on much the same lines as the settlement houses she had worked at before. It was her aim to encourage programs that would lead to better community understanding among all its citizens.

Baylor was born in Boston, July 13, 1880, to a southern family which had fled their home in Georgia during the Civil War.<sup>7</sup> After a brief stay in Cuba, the family settled in Boston, where Margaret and her older sister, Sophie, were born and raised. Attracted to the ideals of Addams' settlement movement, Baylor received her professional training at Hull House, and as an assistant there, gained much of the experience which later would enable her to become one of the most prominent social workers of her time.<sup>8</sup> Baylor was employed at the Anna Louise Inn for Single Women, in Cincinnati Ohio, when she was approached for the Neighborhood House appointment. The recommendation for the position most likely came at the instigation of her sister, Sophie, who then was living in Santa Barbara, and was an Association board member.

Soon after Baylor arrived, she began developing plans for the expansion of Neighborhood House facilities. It was her concept to develop a community center that would provide services for adults as well as children. At her urging, programs were expanded to incorporate activities which included Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas parties for the needy, sewing classes and outdoor dances. Other services provided transient shelter for single women and citizenship classes that helped the foreign-born assimilate into American society.

After purchase of the property at the corner of Carrillo and Anacapa, money was raised, and time and material donated by professional and business people, to help erect Recreation Center. Building and construction of the Center began in the summer of 1913. Under the auspices of Baylor and with donations reaching in excess of \$40,000, plans for its completion were targeted for the following year.

A local architect, J. Corbly Pool, volunteered his services by offering to design architectural plans for the building. On June 19, 1913, the *Santa Barbara Morning Press* reported that "the auditorium will be the double frontage of the property at the south corner of Anacapa and Carrillo... the building plan will provide architectural harmony with the adobe, still to serve the purpose of the (Natural) History Society."<sup>10</sup> The newspaper article stated further that the building "will be begun about the middle of July."

Alfred Jensen was hired as the general contractor and Dona Youmans, an interior designer, was selected to purchase the furniture and hangings.<sup>11</sup> According to John A. Berger's biography of Fernand Lungren, Charlotte Bowditch asked the artist to paint a scene depicting a Hopi Indian, similar to a Lungren painting she owned, for the smaller meeting room opening off the assembly hall. His work, "The Crier," was listed in the appendix of that book published in 1936, as still hanging at the Recreation Center.<sup>12</sup>

As designed by Pool, Recreation Center is a two-story brick building with red tile hipped roof. Underneath the projecting eaves are massive curving bungalow-like brackets and exposed rafters, wood frame casement windows with transoms, and Chicago frame windows. The architect designed the building to reflect the broad rectangular lines popular with Craftsman and Prairie School architects of the time.



### Recreation Center Dedication

On August 11, 1914, Recreation Center was ready for dedication. That day hundreds of people attending the opening ceremonies had the opportunity to listen to testimonial speeches and to stroll through the new facility. People were particularly eager to view the auditorium's dance floor which had been installed with metal springs underneath. In addition to dancing, the large auditorium could be used for plays, musicals, concerts, lectures and political rallies. The Center also had rooms for small gatherings, another smaller auditorium for lectures and teas, and upper-floor rooms devoted to women in need of temporary sleeping quarters.

Among the sustainers of the Neighborhood House and a strong ally of Baylor's desire for the establishment of Recreation Center, was Pearl Chase. Fresh from graduation at the University of California at Berkeley in 1909, Chase began her association with the Neighborhood House by teaching cooking classes. Shortly afterward, she was elected to the board and participated in the decision to hire Margaret Baylor.<sup>13</sup> Like many other Santa Barbarans who supported volunteer work and admired the ideals of women such as Baylor, it was quite natural for Chase and other citizens with similar interests to become involved in her altruistic projects. Chase's initial work with the Neighborhood House was the beginning of a lifetime of service devoted to the city she loved so well.

A few months after the opening, World War I broke out in Europe, and for the duration the Center was used by various war effort groups, including the Santa Barbara Red Cross and the Belgian Relief organization.<sup>14</sup>

During this period plans were discussed for the construction of a gymnasium adjacent to the Center. Finally, Ellen Chamberlain, an Association member and daughter of a prominent Santa Barbara family, stepped forward with a contribution of \$20,000, half the sum needed to erect the gymnasium. Matching funds soon were raised, and in 1917 land was purchased from John F. Catlett, owner of the Overland Livery Stable, located next to the Center on Carrillo Street. Later that year the stable was torn down, and in February, 1918, the gymnasium addition was completed.<sup>15</sup> From its opening until the end of the war, this facility too was used for war relief work by the Red Cross chapter of Santa Barbara.

Once the war ended, functions at the Center returned to normal, with such popular activities as tennis on the roof of the gymnasium, Saturday night dances, youth programs, craft classes and other social events. In 1920 Pearl Chase and Mrs. Albert Herter began the charming custom of hosting an annual community Christmas celebration.<sup>16</sup> These activities, plus other services, insured the acceptance of the Center as a social hub of Santa Barbara.

### A Woman's Hotel

For many years Baylor envisioned a hotel for women as an adjunct to Recreation Center. Increased use of the Center's "transient rooms" by women in the early 1920s encouraged her to initiate an inquiry regarding the feasibility of building a hotel for women travelers and low income business and professional people. A preliminary survey by Minerva Cross, an employee of the Recreation Center and member of the Business and Professional Women's Club, appeared to confirm the need in Santa Barbara. The survey showed that as many as two hundred women would be interested in such a facility.<sup>17</sup>

In 1921, the Neighborhood House Association acquired the remaining property owned by the Natural History Society at 924 Anacapa Street. In an agreement with the Association the "Historic Adobe" was moved several blocks away to its

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present location in the 700 block of Santa Barbara Street.

In 1924, Baylor developed plans for a three-story structure whose purpose was to furnish transient and permanent accommodations for single professional women. Unfortunately, that same year she died before seeing the completion of this last project, and it was left to others to accomplish her cherished task. In 1925, Chase helped form a committee whose goal was to raise money for the erection of the hotel that was to be named in honor of Baylor. By the summer of 1925, money had been raised through donations and the placing of a mortgage on the Recreation Center.

San Francisco architect Julia Morgan was hired to design plans for what was to be called the Margaret Baylor Inn. Her previous works, including a number of California YMCAs, the splendid Hearst Memorial gymnasium at the University of California, Berkeley, just completed, and a number of institutional buildings at Mills College, made Morgan a natural candidate for the job of designing such a building.

Julia Morgan is considered by most architectural historians to be the greatest woman architect in America, yet she is known to few outside her professional field. Personal publicity was an anathema to this woman who designed more than eight hundred structures in her lifetime. She once was quoted as saying that a written compilation of her work was unnecessary, convinced that her work would speak for itself. Born in San Francisco January 26, 1872, she graduated in 1894 with an Engineering degree from the University of California at Berkeley, one of the first women to graduate in that major from Berkeley.

In 1900, she finished thirteenth out of a class of 392 from *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, and achieved the distinction of being the first woman to graduate with an architectural degree from the Parisian school. Returning to California, she settled in Oakland and worked initially under the tutelage of architect John Galen Howard. Jobs included during this period were the Greek Theater and the Hearst Memorial Mining Building on the Berkeley campus.

### Julia Morgan's Achievements

She set up practice in the Merchants Exchange Building in San Francisco in 1906. Soon she received recognition as a fine architect, and was commissioned to design numerous buildings and residences in the Bay area. In 1919, William Randolph Hearst, impressed with the Hearst Mining Building and other Morgan projects, commissioned by his mother, Phoebe Apperson Hearst, hired her as his architect to design and supervise construction of his ranch home at San Simeon. This project for Hearst was to keep Morgan engaged for the next twenty years. Even though she was heavily involved in the Hearst enterprise, it did not preclude her from accepting assignments from other clients, such as the Neighborhood House Association.

Once Morgan was chosen for the project here, a committee was set up to work in liaison with the architect. Plans for the design of the hotel were discussed between the committee and Morgan throughout the early summer of 1925. It was for just such a purpose that she found herself in Santa Barbara on the day of the 1925 earthquake.<sup>18</sup> According to a first-person account of Morgan's in a letter found in the Pearl Chase collection at the University of California at Santa Barbara, she recounts how

the shock came [and] threw me down on my knees. I crawled on my knees into the street until I felt the car tracks and then worked my way



down thru the blinding dust to a place in front of an auto salesroom... I could see those great plate glass windows quiver before every wave and shock and the concrete posts of the building moved to an angle of at least 20 degrees.<sup>19</sup>

### 1925 Earthquake

The powerful earthquake witnessed by Morgan occurred on the morning of June 29, at 6:44 a.m. Registering 6.3 on the Richter scale, the tremor caused extensive damage in the city. The Santa Barbara Mission lost portions of both of its twin towers, while one wall of the Hotel California collapsed, exposing bedrooms to the street. Other hotels and stores were damaged similarly, littering the streets with pieces of brick, concrete and broken glass. The business district was particularly hard hit, since many of its buildings were constructed of unreinforced brick and mortar.

Water had to be cut off, due to breaks in the pipes, and alert gas and electric company employees turned off utilities to prevent fires. Sheffield Reservoir broke and flooded parts of the lower eastside of Santa Barbara... The quake seemed to be centered in the Santa Barbara area. Estimated damage to the city eventually reached a total of \$10,000,000. Considering how severe the earthquake was, it is miraculous that only thirteen people died.

The Recreation Center, though built of brick, was for the most part unscathed by the quake. The gymnasium, however, was so badly damaged that a short time later it had to be torn down. Because of its convenient location in the city, and the fact that it was one of the few large structures undamaged by the disastrous quake, the Center became the hub of relief and recovery activities for the beleaguered city.

By 8:a.m. on the morning of the 29th, the Center was being set up as headquarters for emergency services needed by the people of Santa Barbara. All of the banks, with one exception, reopened at the Recreation Center. A special information service was provided to register new addresses of doctors, drug stores, and other vital businesses.<sup>20</sup> Hundreds of people came in during the first week for the comfort and help afforded them in the Center.

The 1925 earthquake caused a major change in the plans of the proposed Margaret Baylor Inn. The new building was required to be larger, totally fireproof, and resistant to earthquakes. These additional requirements increased the anticipated construction costs. At the same time, the Neighborhood House Association had to consider what to do about reconstruction of the gymnasium. It was decided to hire Morgan to draw plans for a new gym and coordinate it with the hotel project.

The earthquake caused major changes for the city as well. Passage of a building permit ordinance implemented just prior to the quake proved to be timely. Now, after the catastrophe, the city already had a law that could be used to execute better building practices. The newly-formed Building Permit Department saw that the more stringent construction codes were enforced to give Santa Barbara more consistency in its building guidelines.

Many residents felt that the earthquake, though a calamity, could be a "blessing in disguise," to rebuild an even more beautiful Santa Barbara. One way to accomplish this was to regulate the architectural style of the city's commercial and civic buildings. As a result, an ordinance was passed making it mandatory that henceforth new structures must be designed in Mediterranean style. On July 4, 1925, the *Santa Barbara Morning Press* reported that "Santa Barbara now had an un-

paralleled opportunity to rebuild logically and in accordance with the most modern standards in architectural and city planning."

Shortly after the quake the City Council enacted Ordinance 1256, which authorized the establishment of the Architectural Board of Review.<sup>22</sup> Initially, in the wake of the recent disaster, the business community united solidly behind the aspirations of the Architectural Board. But only a few months after passage of the new ordinance, businessmen began to complain about the restrictiveness of the law . . . Consequently, just eight months after its implementation, a newly-elected City Council . . . rescinded the law and dismissed the Architectural Board of Review.<sup>23</sup>

### Margaret Baylor Inn

In the meantime, plans for construction of the Margaret Baylor Inn and the gymnasium were implemented quickly. A letter printed in the August, 1925 issue of the *California Conference of Social Work* magazine stated that "the Recreation Center required minor repairs to plaster and brick work in the main building," and that its gymnasium was to be "torn down." The article went on to point out, "the Recreation Center had decided to proceed with the building of the Women's Hotel on adjacent grounds. The need for housing by women without a home will be greater than ever."<sup>24</sup>

Actual construction of the hotel proceeded after a final permit was issued on March 10, 1926. The building was to be four stories and a basement, with a total capacity of 105 beds. It was to measure 7,500 square feet and its cost was budgeted at \$180,000. In actuality when completed in 1927 and dedicated on March 13, construction costs had reached a final total of \$245,000.<sup>25</sup>

The Margaret Baylor Inn as conceived by Morgan is a Mediterranean styled structure with tiled roof. Windows were of symmetrical design and had the same bay rhythm on the first three floors. French doors repeated at the second story level opened onto iron-worked balconies. The central main entrance is recessed behind an arch with a large keystone inscribed with a double swan motif. Swans are also employed in the grilles on either side of the main entrance.

Each bay of the fourth floor is separated into an individual loggia by a thick wall detailed as an engaged pier with stylized composite capital and a mask-like face superimposed on them. The Inn appears to be an Italian palazzo interpreted by the architect in the Beaux-Arts manner, and as executed by Morgan, blends in nicely with the Mediterranean-style buildings located nearby.<sup>26</sup>

Erection of the gymnasium coincided with the construction of the women's hotel, and by January, 1927, it was nearing completion at a cost of \$40,000.<sup>27</sup> The exterior of the two-story concrete gymnasium was designed by Morgan in an architectural style best described as Spanish Colonial Revival. The balcony has a sloping roof, and the tops of the walls above roof level have tile copings. The south and east sides of the building have pairs of slim, arched windows joined with a central acanthus capital. Placed between each pair of windows is an engaged column.

The wood-spindled balcony is situated to one side, giving the facade a slightly asymmetrical look. Windows are metal factory sash awning types, and the rooftop is enclosed by a chain link fence. The architect made no attempt to pattern the gym in the same style as that of the Recreation Center, even though they stood adjacent to each other. This could have been due to Morgan's attempt to conform to the new architectural code passed shortly after the earthquake. The interior of the building was painted in shades of blue and gray, and had maple hardwood floors on the



ground level. An interesting feature designed by Morgan was the rooftop tennis court and moveable handball court.

### The Center's Services

Throughout the 1920s and 30s the Recreation Center and gymnasium continued to be popular as a gathering spot for young and old alike. After Baylor's death in 1924, the Center was administered by Bertha Rice, her associate director. Still privately controlled, the Center continued to be funded by public donations until a year after the death of Rice in 1941.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, the Neighborhood House Association was overly optimistic regarding the women's use of the Margaret Baylor Inn. Years later Pearl Chase stated in a personal interview that few women availed themselves of the hotel facilities.<sup>29</sup> Intended for the most part as a moderately-priced residence for young business and professional women, the Inn encountered difficulties in achieving full occupancy almost from the beginning. During the Depression many of the tenants were not as "prosperous" as they had been. As a consequence, a dispute arose between the hotel and its permanent residents when a new Inn policy required them to pay either a dollar a day for dining room privileges, or pay the higher transient rates for their rooms. The women asserted that they could not afford the extra expense when added to the twenty to forty dollars per month that they paid for their rooms, particularly as they could eat more reasonably elsewhere. Residents indicated that they would be forced to leave if the mandatory dining room patronage was put into effect.<sup>30</sup>

The additional costs required of the women's hotel, as a result of the stricter earthquake building code, and the fact that the hotel continually ran at a lower capacity than anticipated, put a financial strain on the Association.

Furthermore, during the Depression, private sources of funding dried up, many of the previous donors finding that they simply could not afford to be as generous now as before the economic crash.<sup>31</sup> This put such a serious crimp in the financial resources of the Association that ultimately it was unable to meet the mortgage payments.

Mortgages on the three buildings were held by Pacific Mutual Life Insurance, and in an agreement between the two concerns, payments were temporarily suspended during the 1930s. It was hoped by the Association that they would be able to recover from their fiscal problems, but by 1942 it was obvious to the insurance company and the Neighborhood House that this would not be the case, and as a result, that same year Pacific Mutual foreclosed on the properties.

Meanwhile, attempts were being made to keep the Recreation Center open, Joyce Gardiner, a past associate of the Neighborhood House, recalled how money was raised by Santa Barbara's children to help buy the Center.<sup>32</sup> "The children felt that while adults had many places to go to for entertainment, they had few facilities where they could participate in youth activities." Gardiner stated further, "There was an urgency by people to purchase the Center, as there had been talk that a night club wished to pick up the option on the building."

In response to the young people's desires to obtain the Center, a Youth Campaign committee was formed to raise the necessary funds to buy the property. On February 10, 1944, the Recreation Commission of Santa Barbara recommended that the City Council buy the Center at its asking price of \$30,000.<sup>33</sup> The price included the property, the main building, the auditorium, the gymnasium, and the furnishings. On April 5, 1944, a letter from the Youth Campaign Committee to the



## RECREATION CENTER AND MARGARET BAYLOR INN

Mayor indicated that \$23,000 had been contributed by various student organizations, civic groups and businesses to help in the purchase of the Recreation Center.

Urged by various individuals and with most of the needed money in hand, the City Council voted to purchase the Recreation Center in April, 1944. The Center shortly afterward was deeded to the Santa Barbara City Board of Education, which was given the responsibility of operating the facility.

Initially, the newly-renamed City Recreation Center continued many of the same youth programs as conducted before by the Neighborhood House.<sup>34</sup> But, according to Gardiner, who remained with the Center until her retirement in 1961, "By the 1950s, when cars were in greater use by young people, the Cabrillo Pavilion at West Beach had become more popular. The Center from this period on became more adult oriented."<sup>35</sup>

### The Inn's Changes

Meanwhile, a year after the City purchased the Center, the Margaret Baylor Inn was sold to T. M. Storke, owner and publisher of the *Santa Barbara News Press*.<sup>36</sup> After the sale, the Inn was renamed Hotel Lobero. Two years later, Storke sold his interest in the hotel to the City, and for a brief period, until 1951, the City held title to the property. In 1951 the City sold the hotel. Between 1951 and 1961 the property continued to change hands, the majority of the time functioning as a hotel, but seldom with great success. By 1959, the building had been turned into a residence hall for UCSB students, and continued to operate in this capacity for the next two years.

Finally, in 1961, the property was purchased by a buyer who saw potential for the building, not as a hotel, but as a possible office space for Santa Barbara's commercial interests. Consequently, the building's interior was renovated and re-designed for its new function as rental office space, and while succeeding owners have continued to renovate the interior, the architectural integrity of the exterior has been kept intact.

The City Recreation Center continues to operate programs and activities for its citizens in much the same manner as when first opened some seventy years ago. Many of the classes and programs are free or are offered at a nominal charge. The major difference, as noted earlier, is that the emphasis in recent years is toward greater adult usage of the facility than in the past, when it was the focal point of youth activities for the children of Santa Barbara. After extensive repair work at a cost of \$45,000, the spring-loaded dance floor is again in use. Renovation of the cantilevered suspension system of the seventy-two-year-old floor was completed in July, 1985.<sup>37</sup>

While the Lobero Building no longer functions in its original capacity as a hotel, nevertheless it still serves the people of Santa Barbara. Because of renovation rather than demolition of the Inn and replacement with a new structure, people have the advantage of retaining the original attractive building, revamped to an alternate use, while still maintaining a fine example of a great architect's work. Today, both the City Recreation Center and the Lobero Building continue to function as important adjuncts to Santa Barbara's recreational and business communities.

\*This was a research paper for a history course at UCSB. Pamela Post is a graduate student at the University, and works at the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation.



## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The Royal Presidio of Santa Barbara, founded in 1782, was the last of the four military forts built by the Spanish in Alta California.
- <sup>2</sup> Sanborn map of Santa Barbara, Calif., 1886. Map and Imagery Room, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- <sup>3</sup> Oral interview, Mary Louise Days, June 23, 1984.
- <sup>4</sup> *Santa Barbara Morning Press*, May 24, 1913.
- <sup>5</sup> The YPCA was not connected with the YMCA. A separate organization, the YMCA, was established in Santa Barbara on March 15, 1887.
- <sup>6</sup> The "Boys Club" had no connection with the Boys Club of America.
- <sup>7</sup> M. Ann Windolph, "A Case Study of an Outgrowth of Settlement Work: The Department of Recreation of the City of Santa Barbara, Calif., 1929-1941." (Unpublished Master's thesis), March, 1968. Special Collections, University of California, Santa Barbara, p. 15.
- <sup>8</sup> Windolph, op. cit., p. 10.
- <sup>9</sup> Walker Tompkins, *Santa Barbara History Makers* (Santa Barbara, 1983) p. 309.
- <sup>10</sup> *Santa Barbara Morning Press*, June 19, 1913.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11a</sup> Berger, John A., *Fernand Lungren; a Biography*. The Schauer Press, (Santa Barbara, 1936.)
- <sup>12</sup> *Santa Barbara News-Press*, October 11, 1964.
- <sup>13</sup> Windolph, op. cit., p. 12.
- <sup>14</sup> Tompkins, op. cit., p. 311.
- <sup>15</sup> Leila Weeks Wilson, *Santa Barbara Guide Book* (Santa Barbara, 1919) p. 70.
- <sup>16</sup> Mary Louise Days, *Histories of Individual Parks of City of Santa Barbara*, (Santa Barbara, 1977), p. 9.
- <sup>17</sup> Windolph, op. cit., p. 20.
- <sup>18</sup> Source for this information came from a telegram sent from Thaddeus Joh, an employee of Julia Morgan, addressed to William Randolph Hearst.
- <sup>19</sup> Julia Morgan letter, Pearl Chase papers, Ephemeral Collection, Special Collections, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- <sup>20</sup> *Noticias*, 7, (Summer, 1959), p. 25.
- <sup>21</sup> Windolph, op. cit., p. 20.
- <sup>22</sup> Bruce Klobucher, "Effect of the '25 Earthquake on City Planning," (unpublished paper), p. 10.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> Disasters: Earthquake, Ephemeral Collection, Special Collection, Special Collections, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- <sup>25</sup> *Santa Barbara News-Press*, March 13, 1977.
- <sup>26</sup> John Chase, "Architectural and Historic Resources Survey," prepared November 27, 1978.
- <sup>27</sup> Following the earthquake of 1925, the Santa Barbara Relief Fund Committee appointed as an emergency organization by the City Council, administered funds to help rebuild a larger gymnasium.
- <sup>28</sup> Windolph, op. cit., p. 19.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 20.
- <sup>30</sup> *Santa Barbara News-Press*, March 16, 1980.
- <sup>31</sup> Windolph, op. cit., p. 22-23.
- <sup>32</sup> Oral interview, Joyce Gardiner, June 11, 1984.
- <sup>33</sup> City of Santa Barbara: Parks and Recreation Department, Ephemeral Collection, Special Collections, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- <sup>34</sup> The Neighborhood House continued to play an active role in contributing to the social welfare of the city. Regrouping their financial affairs after the foreclosure, they continued in operation until after WW II, when they became a part of the Community Chest.
- <sup>35</sup> Oral interview, Joyce Gardiner, June 11, 1984.
- <sup>36</sup> Tax Assessors Records, Tax Assessors Office, Santa Barbara County Administration Building, Santa Barbara.
- <sup>37</sup> *Santa Barbara News-Press*, March 24, 1985, July 20, 1985.



# SAN MARCOS PASS HISTORY

1898 - 1914

By Stella Haverland Rouse

A story in *Noticias*, Volume XXVI, No. 2, summer, 1980, summarized the development and use of the San Marcos Pass Toll Road, up to the time that it was deeded to the county, October 7, 1898, and became a public road, from Maria Ygnacia Creek at the foot of the San Marcos Pass to its crossing of the Santa Ynez River in the Santa Ynez Valley. It was used as a stage route from about 1870 until 1901, when stage service was discontinued from the north after completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad line northward.

A history of the San Marcos Pass by "A Paisana" in the *Daily News*, January 16, 1926,<sup>1</sup> enumerated some of the vehicles and the personages who would have gone over the old toll road and its successor, the county road. From the 1870s stagecoaches took passengers from Santa Barbara to meet the northbound stages or later the narrow gauge railroad in the Santa Ynez Valley.

There were lone travelers in wagons or carriages or on horseback, herdsmen and cowboys driving sheep, hogs, cattle or horses to market or to a different pasture. There were occasional highwaymen to rob the stagecoaches, or prospectors with their burros. The Kellys, who bought Judge Hatch's apiary, hauled their honey to Santa Barbara, or later to the Goleta Depot for shipment east.

As the road developed, homesteaders had settled along the way. Wood hauling was the first source of income for them as the land was cleared for farming, and wood wagons came down the Pass. In a letter to Hugh Weldon, Walker Tompkins said that Dr. Irving Wills remembered that jerkline mule teams used the Pass, and Senator James J. Hollister said that heavy grain wagons were hauled over the mountain by six-horse hitches.

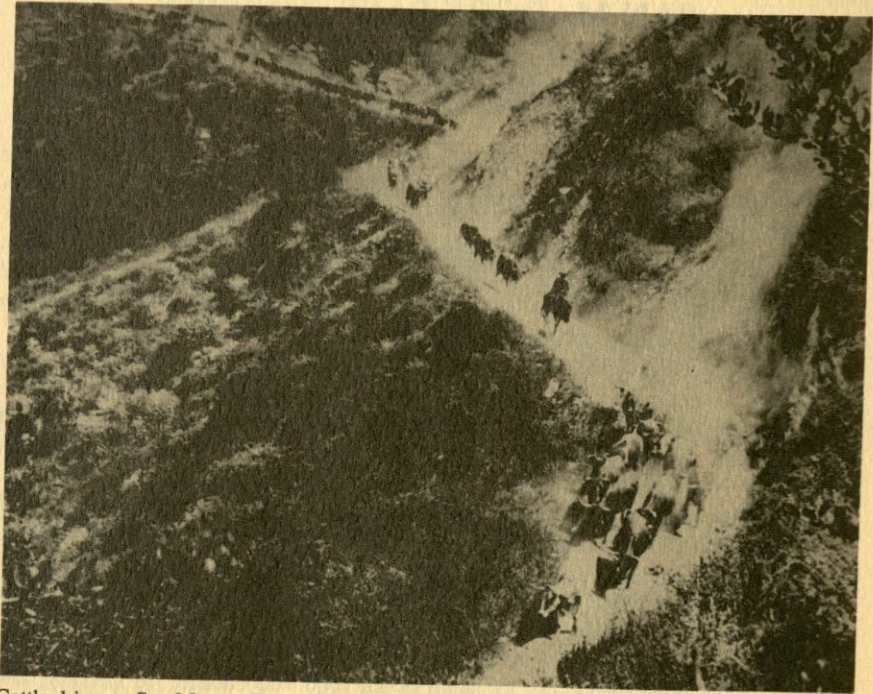
There were wagon peddlers, earning their way by selling their wares to rural customers. The 1926 reporter said, "One little Scotchman, maker of a man-and-beast liniment, always treated his host to some airs on the bagpipes on his departure." Bands of roving gypsies annoyed wary residents along the way. Tramps and hoboes wandered over the Pass from the Santa Ynez Valley to Santa Barbara on their seasonal tours, sleeping in haystacks, or in a sympathetic farmer's barn, and mooching a meal from a housewife, sometimes in exchange for wood chopping or spring weed hoeing. Prospective settlers or campers with wagons loaded with household equipment lumbered up or down the mountain.

In the first part of the twentieth century, within a mile of the foot of the pass, one could expect the approach of heavier freight wagons when bells on the horses' harness chimed down the mountain side. Likewise, lowing of herds of cattle being driven to the Goleta slaughter house or the Goleta Depot in later years, was carried down the canyon.

Pass residents transported their luscious peaches, grapes and apples to Santa Barbara, especially Cyrus Marshall, Jr., whose father, Cyrus, Sr., had bought one of the first houses built on the south side of the mountain—that of Captain George Nidever. The Kinevans, Homer Snyder and hunters, campers and sightseers used what is now called the Old San Marcos Road. Motorists sometimes overcame the steep hairpin turns by backing their cars up steeper spots.

The *Morning Press*, September 9, 1913, told of a party of 15 Santa Barbarans who enjoyed a Sunday outing, to lunch at Cold Spring Lodge. While C.C. Heltman,





Cattle drive on San Marcos Pass, early 1900

Frank J. McCoy Collection

the driver, was familiar with the Pass, it was the first time he had driven an auto over it. And it was thought to be the first time that a truck was employed to take passengers to the summit. (They probably sat on planks set on boxes on the bed of the truck.)

The trip from Santa Barbara in the two-ton vehicle, "with a ton of humanity," took three hours, and the return trip of 18 miles took two hours and 20 minutes (downhill). The truck "consumed a little less than four gallons of distillate, which costs but nine cents a gallon." It was a Moreland.

There are few newspaper references regarding upkeep of the road from 1898 up to the turn of the century, but in May, 1902,<sup>2</sup> a *Morning Press* editorial stated that while there was a "distinct physical uplifting" as one climbed toward the summit, a good road was needed. The grade road on the Santa Barbara side was

good as far as smoothness goes, but it ought in many places to be widened. There should be turning-out places at frequent intervals, of sufficient scope to enable three or four teams to make a siding . . . What adjective would over-express the pleasure of a drive upon the San Marcos Road, whether on the grade, at a decent jog, or spinning through that park called the San Marcos Ranch on the other side?

In the spring of 1903<sup>3</sup> when Joel R. Fithian and Frederick T. Underhill established an "Old Time Stage Coach" scenic outing to the summit, the *Morning Press* reported that the county had been spending "a good sum of money on repair work, and a gang of men under the direction of Road Master Frank Moor have



accomplished wonders in the way of filling up chuck holes and widening the turns."

This improvement was made fortuitously, for automobiles were becoming touring vehicles, and some motorists were beginning to use the San Marcos Pass. A picture on the cover of *Noticias*, Volume XVIII, No. 4, Winter, 1972, shows L.L. Whitman as the first motorist to use the Pass, June 21, 1901, although a caption under a picture accompanying the *Paisana's* story, January 16, 1926, states that the first auto crossed the mountain in 1900.

In May, 1903, when the Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance restricting the speed of automobiles to 15 miles per hour, and making it illegal to operate or ride in an automobile or motorcycle UPON WHAT IS KNOWN AS THE 'MOUNTAIN DRIVE,' THE 'CLIFF DRIVE,' AND THE 'SAN MARCOS PASS,' they were protecting the majority of travelers.

In 1905 this ordinance was being violated, according to newspaper stories, and in July, 1907, another ordinance was submitted, but laid on the table, "to effectually keep the autos off the dangerous San Marcos grade," because they frightened horses.

In those early years the supervisors did not maintain the road as they should have, because of a dispute with the San Marcos Ranch owners, Ira Pierce and others, who attempted to limit the width of the road to twelve or fifteen feet "in some places." In March, 1905,<sup>4</sup> Judge Will Taggart rendered a decision in favor of the county that the road was "a public highway." The road had been maintained by the Toll Road Company until it was sold to the county.

The condition of the Pass south of the summit about that time is discussed in the *Weekly Press*, January 4, 1906, when the Press announced that some time in the coming year settlers would ask that the supervisors help in establishing a new road to the summit, at an elevation of 2,800 feet, instead of the 2,300 feet currently reached. The new road would connect more closely with the Forest Reserve's trail system, make the Painted Cave more available and furnish an outlet for settlers in the vicinity.

Those residents would assist in the road construction, but they felt that the county should contribute more generously to road improvement.

The present road is little better than a trail, and is constructed on a grade that makes its permanent improvement inadvisable. The grade averages about 16 per cent, and a considerable portion is 18 per cent, while one pull reaches the maximum of 22 per cent. The survey along which the line is now proposed is nowhere beyond the 10 per cent limit, and the greater part is on the eight and one-fourth per cent grade....

Portions of the old road would be adopted, but there would be three and one-quarter miles of road to build or rebuild. Construction of the road would be of great advantage in allowing tourists to view the attractive mountain scenery. It would be comparatively simple to connect with an old wood road extending over the summit, and to establish an easy grade to the city's water tunnel and dam site at Gibraltar, shortening the wagon road by several miles. But changes were far in the future.

I have hunted unsuccessfully in supervisors' minutes for several years, but have not been able to find out when the old ordinance was repealed or what took its place, but gradually motoring was accepted there.

Another mountain problem was faced by the Board of Supervisors and members



of the Santa Barbara Automobile Club about 1910.<sup>5</sup> That was the practice of some evangelistic groups of inscribing signs at precarious places on the San Marcos and Gaviota Passes. "Prepare to Meet Thy God" reminded travelers that man's days on earth were numbered, but probably did not result in safer driving on the roads. The attack on the signs was based on the contention "that they were a disfigurement, not on the unpleasant reflection that they give rise to in the minds of travelers whose consciences may be bad." They also had to contend with "sharpshooters" who shot the directional road signs the Automobile Club was erecting.

As motoring increased in importance about 1910, Supervisor A.W. Conover suggested to other members of the board that the historic San Marcos Pass be improved so that a comfortable round trip auto or carriage tour could be made over the San Marcos Pass, into the Santa Ynez Valley, through Santa Ynez and Los Olivos, and back via Las Cruces, Gaviota Pass and the Coast Highway.

One of the first requisites to consider was a bridge across the Santa Ynez River at the San Lucas ranch. County Surveyor F.F. Flournoy was directed to develop plans for a steel bridge which would cost between \$20,000 and \$30,000, to "take the place of the ford that has served travelers across the mountains from this city to the fertile Santa Ynez Valley" since stagecoach days.<sup>6</sup>

The second part of Conover's plan called "for the expenditure of from \$10,000 to \$20,000 in widening the road over the San Marcos Pass, eliminating the sharp angles and reducing all the grades that are so steep as to be dangerous."

The other members of the Board of Supervisors, whose chairman was H.J. Doulton, agreed that such a scenic road would be a wonderful asset to the county's tourist potential, but it was many years before the dream was realized.

The bridge was built, but there was delay in using it, because the route of the road to the bridge was different than that to the old ford crossing, and a new quarter-mile road had to be graded and fenced, according to a newspaper story in July 1912.

There was talk from time to time of improving the San Marcos Pass over the mountain, but that change was much longer in appearing. In January, 1913, a delegation from Santa Ynez appeared before the Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce enlisting that body's support in financing and improving the old San Marcos Road. In February, 1913, there was criticism of the Supervisors for spending \$30,000 on San Lucas bridge, which still lacked approaches, and could not be used, and for neglecting to improve San Marcos Pass which was in poor condition.<sup>7</sup>

In December, 1913, County Surveyor Flournoy reported to the supervisors the result of his recent survey of the San Marcos grade: the essential changes he suggested would result in reducing the grade to seven per cent "from a grade as high as 20 per cent in places, and in eliminating all abrupt curves which are concealed until they are reached by the traveler. All the old horseshoe turns are eliminated and all turns will be on the level, none having a radius of less than 50 feet . . ." He was suggesting eliminating most of the old road and establishing a new one.

Whatever the plans of the road officials in improving the road, they were halted abruptly in January, 1914, when torrential storms destroyed several big bridges in the county.<sup>8</sup> Among them was a new stone bridge at the foot of the San Marcos Pass and near the big laurel tree, across Maria Ygnacia Creek. Numerous culverts were washed away on the Pass, and there were many slides, resulting in the statement that the road would be "impassable for some time."

Additional vicissitudes and ultimate improvements will be reviewed in a later issue of *Noticias*.



REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> *Daily News*, Jan. 16, 1926.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Press*, May 31, 1902.

<sup>3</sup> *Morning Press*, Feb. 24, 1903.

<sup>4</sup> *Morning Press*, March 4, 1905.

<sup>5</sup> *Independent*, June 17, 1910.

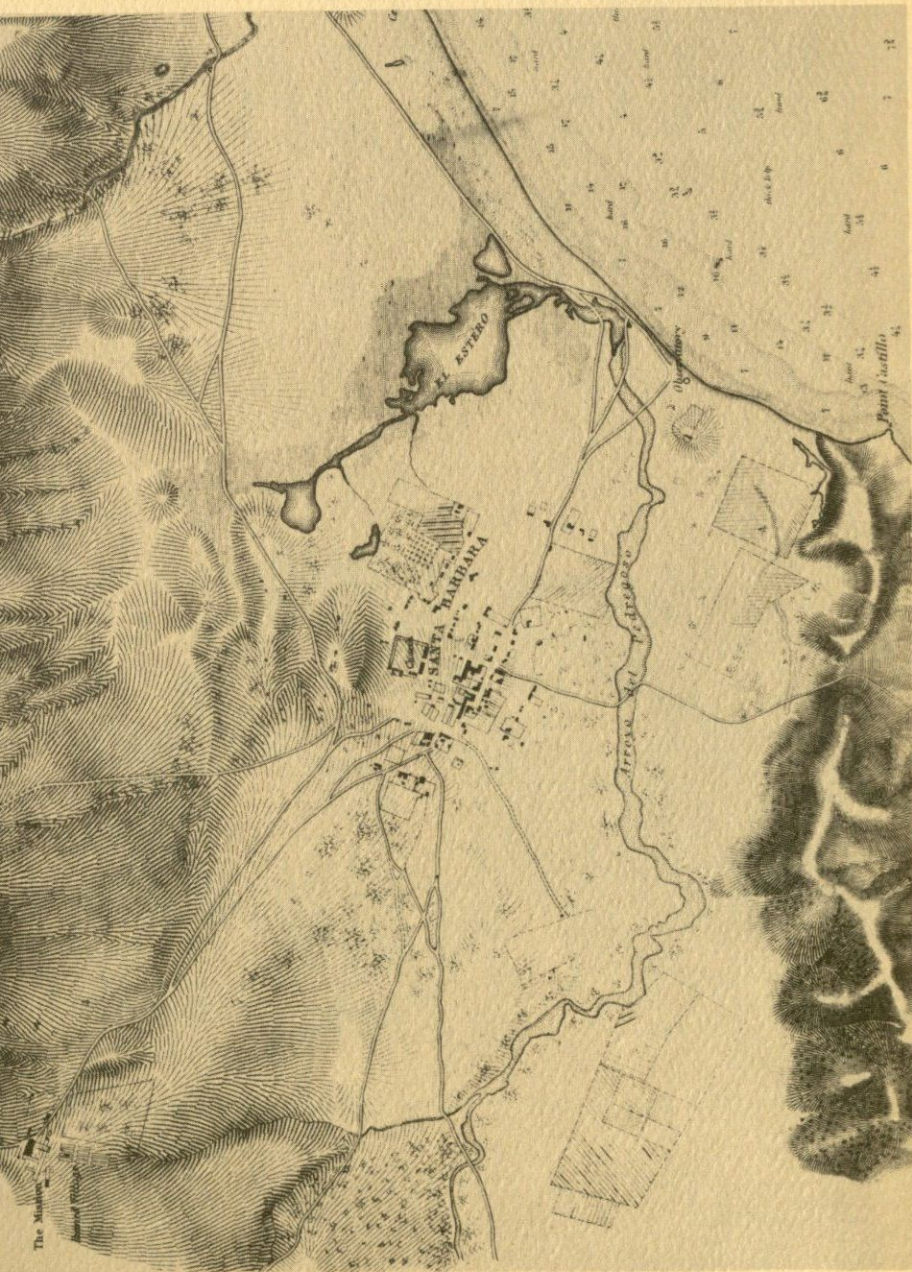
<sup>6</sup> *Independent*, March 8, 1910.

<sup>7</sup> *Independent*, Feb. 20, 1913.

<sup>8</sup> *Daily News*, Jan. 26, 1914.

\*Mr. Myrick, a native Santa Barbaran, is a retired financial officer of the Southern Pacific Company in San Francisco. He has written eight books on Western U.S. history, and is currently compiling a book on





Santa Barbara in 1853. Mission Creek, called *Arroyo del Pedregoso*.

U.S. Coast Survey, 1854—Clifton Smith



# THE CHUMASH HISTORY OF MISSION CREEK

By John R. Johnson\*

Not many Santa Barbarans could give precise information regarding the meandering course which Mission Creek follows on its way to the sea. Probably few pause to consider that the same stream which enters the Pacific Ocean near Stearns' Wharf is that which they have seen while picnicking at Oak Park or while visiting the Museum of Natural History or the Botanic Garden.

Mission Creek once dominated the Santa Barbara landscape before the arrival of the Spanish and the establishment of the mission and pueblo on its banks. Two Indian communities, known to the Chumash as *syuxtun* and *xana'yan* once flourished nearby, depending on Mission Creek for a source of fresh water. The former settlement, *syuxtun*, was a large coastal town near the beach (near Cabrillo Boulevard and Chapala Street). *Xana'yan* was a small village situated in Mission Canyon.

This brief summary of the recorded information regarding Santa Barbara's original native population and their use of Mission Creek is based on two lines of investigation: (1) a history of the two settlements of *syuxtun* and *xana'yan* from the earliest descriptions by Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo in 1542 to their abandonment during the Mission Period and (2) an ethnogeographic survey of Chumash placenames along Mission Creek, mostly recorded by John P. Harrington, Santa Barbara's most famous anthropologist, who worked with Barbareño Indians in the early twentieth century.

## EXPLORERS' DESCRIPTIONS

The Chumash settlement of *syuxtun* at the mouth of Mission Creek was first encountered by the Spanish during Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo's exploration of the California coastline in 1542. Because the original diary of Cabrillo's voyage has been lost, information on the Native Chumash villages which he visited must come from secondary sources, especially a summary prepared in Spain by Juan Páez de Castro some years later (Wagner 1929:319). Unfortunately, the Chumash village names given in Páez's summary are misspelled, duplicated, and often listed out of geographical order. Nevertheless, some sense may be made out of these garbled lists of village names, because some of the same villages which were occupied during Cabrillo's time continued to exist into the Mission Period (Kroeber 1925: 553; Harrington 1928:35; King 1975:176-178). Of particular interest to the current study are village names which apparently correlate with *syuxtun*. Based on linguistic considerations, Harrington (1928:35-36) identified three names from Cabrillo's lists as possible Spanish renditions of *syuxtun*. These are *xocatoc*, *çiucut*, and *yutum*.

The village of *çiucut* (i.e. *syuxtun*) was called the "Pueblos de las Sardinas" by Cabrillo, because of the large numbers of sardines which were seen being caught by Indian fishermen in their plank canoes. Cabrillo visited *çiucut* (*syuxtun*) several times during the course of his voyage. On one stop he was visited by the chief, an old Indian woman, who slept on board his ship with some of her fellow villagers. Cabrillo mentioned that this woman was chief of a province consisting of all the villages between Pt. Concepción and the Pueblo de las Sardinas. The account of his voyage states that "the town of *çiucut* seemed to be the head of the other towns

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because they came from them when called by the chief" (Wagner 1929:88). For decades after Cabrillo's voyage, the Santa Barbara anchorage was shown on incipient maps of the California coast as the "Pueblo de las Sardinias" (Wagner 1937).

Although another voyage of exploration through the Santa Barbara Channel took place in 1604 under the command of Sebastian Vizcaíno, no specific mention of the Santa Barbara harbor occurs in the expedition diaries. It was not until the Portolá expedition of 1769-1770 that we again encounter information about the inhabitants of Mission Creek.

After leaving the Chumash village of Carpinteria near where the expedition camped on August 17, 1769, Portolá and his men moved along the coast, passing burned villages at Paredón (near Summerland) and Montecito. They were guided by the chief of *syuxtun* who had traveled to Carpinteria with Portolá's scouts in order to personally escort the expedition to his village. The Spanish explorers had some difficulty crossing the estuary which extended inland from the mouth of Mission Creek. They camped about "two musket-shots" from *syuxtun*. The entire population of the village came to their camp bringing the Spanish presents of fish, for which they received glass beads in return. The diary of Fr. Crespi, who accompanied the expedition, estimated that the population of *syuxtun* probably numbered between 500 and 600 Indians and was the largest rancheria yet encountered on their northward journey (Brown n.d.). Portolá noted in his journal that *syuxtun* possessed forty or more houses and ten canoes (Smith and Teggart 1909:57). A small freshwater pond, fed by natural springs, was situated adjacent to the village.

After camping near *syuxtun*, to which the Spanish bestowed the name "San Joaquín de la Laguna," Portolá and his expedition moved their camp a short distance inland, probably to the canyon now known as Arroyo Burro. The reason for this move was that the Spanish wished to distance themselves from all the attention and hospitality that they were receiving from the *syuxtun* residents (Teggart 1911:199). The scouts reported that near the creek where they camped there was another ruined village discovered (Brown n.d.), possibly the rancheria of *mismatuk*, which was located near the mountains along the Arroyo Burro (Heizer 1955:200; King 1975). Mission register evidence suggests that *mismatuk* was abandoned just prior to the Mission Period, because only two old Indian women gave that village as their birthplace when they were baptized (Johnson n.d.). The burned villages encountered in the Santa Barbara vicinity were the result of warfare with Indians from the inland region. The latter had also attacked *syuxtun* but had been driven back by the men from that populous village (Brown n.d.).

While camped at Arroyo Burro on August 20, the expedition received a visit from Indians from another village "which must live near one of the watering places here in these woods" (Brown n.d.). This is probably a reference to *xana'yan* in Mission Canyon, which is the only other village besides *mismatuk* known to have existed in Santa Barbara back from the coast in the Spanish Period. Crespi reported that these Indians were all "well behaved, friendly, tractable, and very cheerful."

On January 10, 1770, the Portolá expedition was again in the Santa Barbara area on their return trip to San Diego after discovering San Francisco Bay. Some of the villages of the Santa Barbara Channel which had previously been so generous with sharing their food supply were now found to be without fish during the winter. After camping near the Goleta lagoon, two officers, Pedro Fages and Miguel Costansó, and two missionaries proceeded ahead to *syuxtun* to see if they could obtain some fish to feed the expedition. When they arrived at *syuxtun*, they found nearly the



entire village of 400 to 500 people in the midst of a funeral rite. While the officers looked in the Indian houses for fish, the missionaries observed the ceremony, which Crespi describes in great detail in his diary. The Indians paid no heed to the Spaniards' presence. All were weeping and crying, while three or four of their number covered the body of the deceased with rabbitskin shrouds and numerous strings of beads. A pipe ceremony was also conducted with smoke blown upon the dead man's limbs and body. Not finding the fish they needed, the Spaniards departed without witnessing the end of the funeral. The expedition proceeded onward to Carpinteria and Ventura where they were able to obtain enough fish to meet their needs.

Portolá's expedition initiated the Spanish Mission Period in California history, resulting first in regular, but infrequent contacts between the Chumash and the newcomers. Spanish pack trains would carry mail and supplies between the newly founded missions of San Diego and San Gabriel and those which were being established north of the Santa Barbara Channel. The Spanish were eager to establish missions and a presidio along the Santa Barbara Channel in order to secure the travel route which served as a vital link in the chain of Spanish institutional settlements in California. Before we discuss the founding of the Santa Bárbara Presidio, there is one more early description of *syuxtun* which allows an insight into native life prior to Spanish settlement in the vicinity.

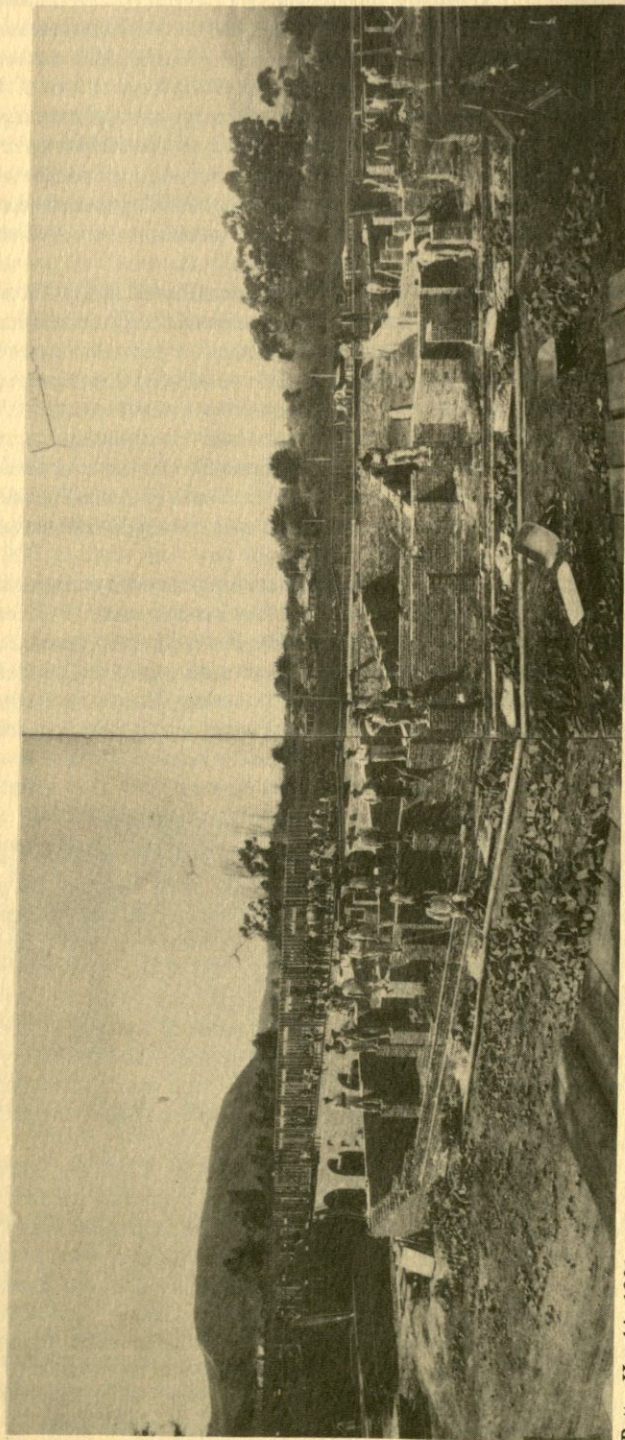
On February 25, 1776, the Anza expedition camped near *syuxtun* on their way northward. Fr. Pedro Font's diary mentions that baskets were obtained from the *syuxtun* Chumash in exchange for glass beads. Font also witnessed the return of some Chumash fishermen with their catch. Their plank canoe, still loaded with fish, was lifted by ten or twelve men and carried to the house of the owner of the launch, a Chumash *capitán*, whose high status was indicated by his bearskin robe (Bolton 1930:258-259).

### YANONALI AND THE PRESIDIO

It is tempting to identify the Chumash *capitán* seen by Font, as well as the chief who had accompanied Portolá to his village in 1769, with Yanonali, the paramount chief of *syuxtun*, who later is so well documented during the early Mission Period. Yanonali's name, also written as *Yanonalit*, *Yamnonalit*, and *Yanunali*, first crops up in documents relating to the founding of the Santa Bárbara Presidio. He apparently opposed the idea of the Spaniards establishing their fort so near to his village. The Chumash experience with the behavior of Spanish soldiers was not always the best. However, Governor Felipe de Neve and the Missionary President, Fr. Junípero Serra, both negotiated with Yanonali, and won his friendship through kindness, gifts, respect, and punishing those soldiers who had wronged the Indians (Geiger 1965:8; Beilharz 1971:157).

The Santa Bárbara Presidio was founded on April 21, 1782. Fr. Serra had intended to stay and found the mission at the same time, becoming the first missionary there, but lack of supplies and personnel prevented its immediate establishment, or so he was led to believe. It was in fact Neve's intention to introduce a change in how the missions were organized, and he wanted to delay Mission Santa Bárbara's establishment until his plan could be put into operation. Neve wanted the Indians to remain in their native settlements and not be concentrated into communities under the missionaries' direction. He felt that the Indians should be attracted to Christianity only through visits by the missionaries to native villages, where the converts would continue to reside. Neve's plan would have eliminated the need for large-scale





Potter Hotel in 1901 on Burton Mound ('*amolomol*'), part of former rancheria site of *syuxutun*.

S.B. Museum of Natural History, Harrington Collection

farming operations carried out would have been managed. A program was announced, and missionaries, who succeeded in Spain (Geiger 1965:3).

So the founding of Mission Santa Bárbara while the presidio was still in the building of the mission. Money in the native trade was used to build the presidio with 41 buildings, but cooperation (Beilharz 1965:1). Workers and noted if he could not shall be able to finish the mission.

The Spanish authorities learned that he was the Governor Neve mentioned over thirteen ranches (Bancroft 1886:377; Geiger 1977). According to the fact that he had several children (polygamy (Brown n.d.)). That he was able to barter against the Spanish). Yana's assassination of the chief *shnaxalayiwit* (Najalayewit) latter chief may have been the old chief of this village.

It would be interesting to read the dictionary. In his early publication, he stated that Yanonali's area was Goleta, but he provided no information. Harrington's consultant, who was *wot* of all the territory (Harrington n.d.). An area register information, supplied by Johnson, Warren, and others, that Yanonali was well known (California Archives 23:331). Carpinteria killed a bull (3:331).

Mission Santa Bárbara was founded in 1783 by Father Vicente de Santa María. It was not until 1786 that new missionaries had power for founding Mission Santa Bárbara. The missionary president, travel to find the Montecito site situated at the foot of Mission Canyon.



carried out by the missions. The temporal affairs of the Indians were managed instead by the Spanish military. When his proposed plan was rejected, there was universal opposition from the Franciscan missionaries. It was not until 1765 that Neve's plan was overturned by the king's authorities (Geiger 1965:8-11; Beilharz 1971:95-96, 119-120).

At Mission Santa Bárbara was delayed for more than four years before the presidio was under construction. Indians from *syuxtun* assisted voluntarily in the construction of the presidio in exchange for glass beads, which were used as part of the trade system. Neve left Lt. José Francisco Ortega in charge of distributing bundles of glass beads to assist him in obtaining Chumash goods (Beilharz 1971:157). Ortega commented that the Chumash were happy because they had "enough beads to hand out to them as gifts, I feel that they will leave the presidio in a short time" (Geiger 1965:14).

The authorities kept a careful eye on Yanonali, because they saw him as the most powerful chief among the coastal Chumash villages. He is mentioned in a letter to the viceroy that Yanonali's authority extended over the rancherías, so that continued friendship with him was desirable (Geiger 1965:14). His high chiefly status is also indicated by his having several wives, one of whom lived on Santa Cruz Island (Warren 1982). In the early Spanish diarists, only chiefs of importance practiced polygamy (d.). Yanonali's political power was demonstrated by the fact that he banished another chief who had plotted rebellion (apparently in 1765). Yanonali may also have been responsible for ordering the execution of the chief of Montecito, who was blamed for the death of the chief of Layegua, a village in the mountains behind Santa Barbara. The viceroy had been Yanonali's son, because he is described as the "son of the village [*syuxtun*]" (Brown 1967:48).

Not knowing to which thirteen villages fell under Yanonali's jurisdiction, the publication, *History of the City of Santa Barbara*, Caballería (1892), stated that Yanonali's authority extended over all the villages between Rincón and Goleta. It provided no source for his assertion (Caballería 1892:39). The historian, Fernando Librado, stated that the *wot* (chief) of *syuxtun* controlled a territory extending between Dos Pueblos and Carpinteria (Librado 1982). An analysis of Chumash marriage patterns, based on mission records, supports strong links between the four Goleta towns and *syuxtun* (Warren 1982). Early presidio correspondence mentions that the viceroy well received when he visited the Goleta rancherías in 1783 (Geiger 1965:23:100) and that he acted as go-between when Indians from the mission's herd in 1786 (California Archives).

### MISSION FOUNDING

Santa Barbara was originally planned for Montecito based on a reconquest by Governor Pedro Fages, who succeeded Neve, and Fr. Fermín de Lasuén, who was stationed at Mission San Buenaventura. It was not until 1786 that new missionaries arrived in California, providing enough manpower to found Mission Santa Bárbara. Fr. Fermín de Lasuén, the second missionary, traveled to Santa Bárbara to select the mission site, but did not find it suitable and selected instead the location of El Pedregoso at Goleta Canyon (Geiger 1965:25). *Pedregoso*, meaning "rocky," was a



loan translation from the Chumash name of the canyon, *xana'yan*, which was also the name of the village located just upstream from the mission (Englehardt 1923:55).

The formal ceremony of founding the mission took place on December 16, 1786. The first three neophytes were baptized on December 31, 1786, including one from *syuxtun* and one from *xana'yan*. On January 24 another man from *xana'yan* was entered in the baptismal register, who had previously received conditional baptism when he was ill from Sgt. Raymundo Carrillo. This man was given the Christian name *Ygnacio*, but was usually referred to as "Ygnacio Carrillo" in the mission records because of Carrillo's influence on his joining the mission. According to the baptismal register, a total of 180 Chumash had enrolled at Mission Santa Bárbara by the end of 1787. This number included 29 from *syuxtun* and 23 from *xana'yan*, together almost 30 percent of the total. By 1808, 201 and 37 Indians from *syuxtun* and *xana'yan*, respectively, were baptized (Johnson n.d.).

One of the early converts from *syuxtun* was apparently an Indian of considerable importance in native Chumash society. His name was José María, and he was baptized on March 6, 1787 at eighteen years of age. In his baptismal entry his Chumash name was given as *Sulumagieguit*, but in later records, he is sometimes called José María *Panay* (Johnson n.d.). Another Indian named *Panay* is mentioned in a baptismal entry of August 17, 1790: a ten year old boy was baptized near death at *syuxtun*, the son of *Panay*, an unbaptized *capitán* of the same *ranchería*. Perhaps the latter-mentioned *Panay* was the father of José María; the Spanish missionaries sometimes passed along the father's Indian name as the surname of the son, even though this was not the Chumash custom.



Luisa Ygnacio

Ernestine McGovern

Several indications in Mission documents indicate that José María was of high status in spite of his young age, which would also be expected if his father was one of the chiefs at *syuxtun*. One of the pieces of evidence which links José María to a high status family is the fact that he was married to the sister of the *capitana* (woman chief) of Montecito when he came to the mission (Johnson n.d.). Marriages among chiefly families from different villages was common in Chumash society (Johnson, Warren, and Warren 1982).

The second piece of information detailing the importance of José María in both Chumash society and the mission community comes from a letter by Lasuén:

He is the chief of those Indians. He it is who is in charge of field operations. He collaborates in bringing about the subjection, pacification, and education of those who are Christians, and the conversion of the pagans. He is beloved by the whole nation. I have seen a greater part of the Channel in an uproar, and disposed to take up arms, because a rumor had spread that he had been killed at a *ranchería* in the sierras whether he had gone for a change and a little recreation after he had become a Christian (Kenneally 1965:18).

José María arose to such prominence that he eclipsed Yanonali in the memory of the Barbareño Chumash descendants who were interviewed by J. P. Harrington in the early twentieth century. Luisa Ygnacio told Harrington that she had never heard of Yanonali, but her mother-in-law, María Ygnacia, the daughter of another Chumash *capitán* of *syuxtun*, had told her that "José María gathered the Indians here" (Harrington n.d.).

### BAPTISMAL PATTERN

Figure (3-1) illustrates the baptismal pattern throughout the period in which Chumash were converted who had been born at *syuxtun* and *xana'yan*. The small village of *xana'yan* was abandoned early, within ten years, as a native Chumash settlement. The village of *xana'yan* does not appear among a list of *rancherías* existing along the Santa Barbara Channel coastal strip, compiled in 1796 by Goycochea, the *comandante* of the Santa Bárbara Presidio, and a comment in 1801 in the burial entry of a child whose father was from *xana'yan* states specifically that the village "already no longer exists."

There are three noticeable peaks in the baptismal pattern of persons from *syuxtun*. One occurred in the first year of the mission's existence, the second occurred in 1797, and the last occurred in 1804. There were political reasons for the last two bursts of baptismal activity, which are worthwhile reviewing here.

Mention has already been made of a census of coastal *rancherías* taken by Goycochea in 1796. He was attempting to revive the plan advocated by Felipe de Neve of allowing the Chumash to remain in their own villages, rather than having to join the mission neophyte community once they converted to Christianity. Goycochea persuaded the Missionary President, Fr. Fermín de Lasuén, to give this idea a trial run with the Indians located closest to the mission and presidio at the village of *syuxtun*. Lasuén's description of this event follows:

At Santa Bárbara, as a courtesy to the commandant of the neighboring presidio, I was present at the first attempt made to admit to catechism (but without having it serve as a precedent), under the new privilege the pagans of the *ranchería* which is very close to both establishments; and



I found out that in order to make sure that all would be present without fail, it had been intimated to them that the penalty for refusal to attend would be expulsion and banishment from their *rancheria*. Who could fail to see that this was an unjust form of compulsion? When all the Indians were gathered together I impressed on them very firmly and confidently that nobody would be subjected to such harassment, but that all who wished to become christians, and those who already were, as well as those who were not - all would continue to live in peace under their own roof.

I noticed that several, even with that privilege, did not wish to be converted; and of those who were converted, some availed themselves of it and others did not (Kenneally 1965:278-279).

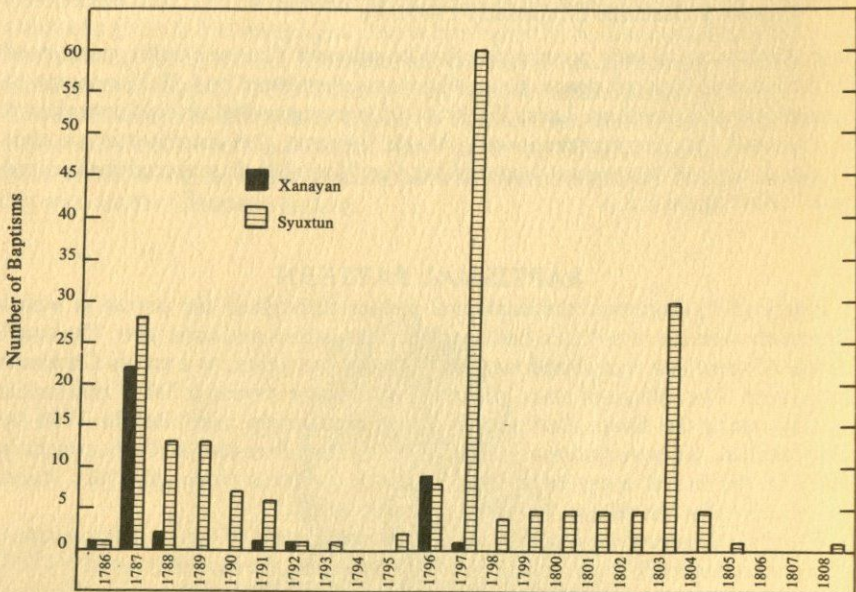


FIGURE 3 - 1 Baptisms of Chumash Native to Syuxtun and Xana'yan

This event took place on August 24, 1797 (California Archives 23:368), and within a month a total of 50 natives of *syuxtun*, including Chief Yanonali, accepted baptism. In spite of missionary opposition to Goycochea's plan, the Governor of California, Diego de Borica, decided to forward it to the viceroy in Mexico. After deliberating over the arguments pro and con, Viceroy Iturrigaray finally decided that the missions should continue to operate in their traditional manner with new converts moving to the missions (Engelhardt 1930:607). His decision apparently triggered a large influx of Chumash to the missions in 1803. In examining baptismal data, it becomes evident that virtually all of the mainland coastal Chumash who had



not yet been converted were baptized in that year (Johnson n.d.). This would seem to be the reason why 1803 was a peak year for baptisms from *syuxtun*, whose population was incorporated into the mission community along with those from other coastal towns.

Not all of the people baptized from *syuxtun* actually became part of the mission population. Thirty-six natives of *syuxtun* were baptized while sick or near death; many of these did not recover to become full members of the mission community. This number included two of Yanonali's children, a young son in 1788, who was buried in the presidio chapel, and an adult daughter in 1803, who was buried at *syuxtun*. A total of six Indians who were baptized near death were buried at *syuxtun* rather than in the mission cemetery.

The death rate was very high among the mission neophytes. Figure (3-2) illustrates the high mortality among converts from *syuxtun* and *xana'yan* during the Mission Period. More than 40 percent of those who had been baptized had died by 1800. By 1810 about 70% of all converts native to *syuxtun* and *xana'yan* were deceased, including José María Panay, who died in 1801, and Pedro Yanonali, who died in 1805. Only one person from *xana'yan* and three from *syuxtun* survived past 1840.

Of the group of people native to Mission Creek villages, the person who lived the longest into the nineteenth century was María Ygnacia, the daughter of the last chief of *syuxtun*, Pablo *Lihuisanaitset*. María Ygnacia eventually settled in the Goleta foothills at Indian Orchard on the creek which now bears her name. She was married four times before her death in 1865. Her son, José Ygnacio, inherited her ranch. Her daughter-in-law, Luisa Ygnacio; her granddaughter, Lucrecia Garcia; and her great-granddaughter, Mary Yee, all served as Chumash consultants to John P. Harrington. Mary Yee, the last speaker of a Chumash language, died in 1965; her children, the great-great grandchildren of the longest surviving *syuxtun* native, still live in the Santa Barbara area today.

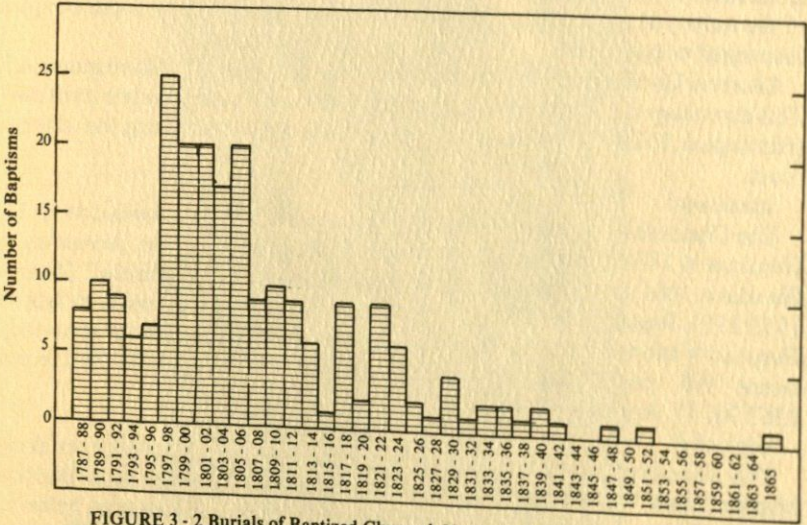


FIGURE 3 - 2 Burials of Baptized Chumash Native to *Syuxtun* and *Xana'yan*



### Chumash Placenames Along Mission Creek

A fair number of Chumash placenames have been recorded for the Mission Creek watershed. Beginning with the mouth of Mission Creek, these placenames will be listed in order, moving upstream, and information derived from Harrington's notes and other sources will be provided.

#### *syuxtun*

The historical role of *syuxtun* has been covered in the preceeding section. Its longstanding political significance to native Chumash society is demonstrated by the fact that both in 1542 and 240 years later in 1782, it served as a capital village and residence of a paramount chief whose authority extended over villages in the surrounding region. The central importance of the Chumash village of *syuxtun* is also indicated by the fact that it is repeatedly mentioned in Chumash oral narratives involving mythological characters who once lived there, including the legendary trickster, Coyote (Blackburn 1975:172-175, 190-192, 204-207, 229-231, 242).

The location of *syuxtun* at the Santa Barbara waterfront is shown on an early map prepared in 1782 at the time of the founding of the Santa Bárbara Presidio (Sahyun and Whitehead 1982:133). A somewhat later drawing in 1793 by John Sykes of the Vancouver expedition, the only surviving contemporary illustration of a Chumash village, shows the Indian houses of *syuxtun* clustered near the beach below Burton Mound (Grant 1965:14-15). The locations shown on the 1782 map and the Sykes drawing, combined with descriptions in the journals of the Portolá expedition, appear to coincide with the archaeological site SBA-27, investigated by D. B. Rogers in the 1920's. It is also possible that SBA-29, also mentioned by Rogers, may have been part of *syuxtun* (Rogers 1929). However, Rogers does not mention whether Mission Period artifacts were recovered during his excavations. John P. Harrington believed that Burton Mound, SBA-28, represented the remains of *syuxtun* (Harrington 1928). The fact that numerous glass beads and items of Spanish manufacture were recovered there would lend support to his assertion; but it may be that only the cemetery was located on the mound with the village itself situated closer to the beach. All three of these archaeological sites located just west of the estuary at the mouth of Mission Creek may together form a site complex associated with *syuxtun*.

Lucrecia García translated the name *syuxtun* as "it splits" (Harrington n.d.). This etymology was interpreted by Harrington to mean "where the two trails run" (Harrington 1928:31), referring to a fork in the main trail along the channel coast.

#### *'amolomol*

The Chumash placenames *'amolomol* first appears in a list provided to H. W. Henshaw in 1884 by his Ventureño consultant, Juan Esteván Pico. According to Henshaw, this name referred to the "old wharf at Burton house" (Heizer 1955:195). Rogers called SBA-27 "*Amolomol*," which is reasonable in light of Henshaw's information from Pico, however the Chumash translation apparently means "hill, mound" and probably refers to Burton Mound, SBA-28 (Brown 1967:36, 47; Applegate 1975:26).

#### *'alpinche'*

This placename, which means "one that is spread open," is actually not along Mission Creek, but apparently refers to the general vicinity of the Santa Bárbara Presidio. Rogers, based on Kroeber's 1925 map of Chumash placenames, believed that "*Alpincha*" corresponded with Burton Mound (Rogers 1929:108). The data provided by Harrington's Chumash consultants clearly correct this mistake.



## THE CHUMASH HISTORY OF MISSION CREEK

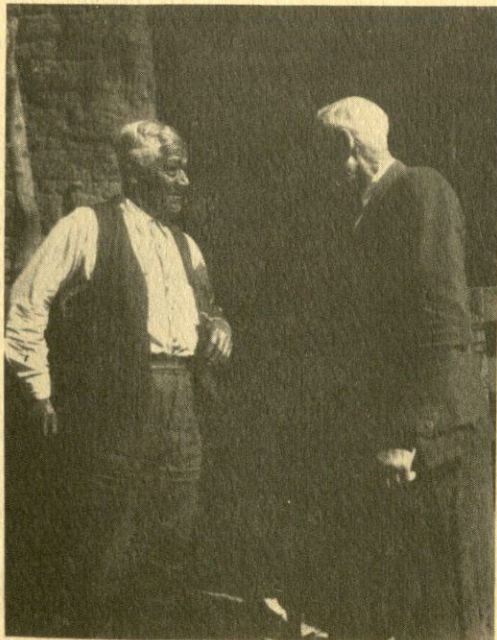
According to Juan Justo, a Barbareño consultant, '*alpinche*' referred to the "center of Santa Barbara." Luisa Ygnacio, Fernando Librado, and Juan Justo all agreed that the placename was applied as a general name for the town of Santa Barbara, which had grown up around the old presidio. Luisa Ygnacio explained the meaning of the name to refer to where "there were acorns of liveoak and whiteoak that opened themselves readily" (Harrington n.d.).

### *qenepstin*

Juan Justo was the only one of Harrington's consultants who provided a placename for Oak Park, *qenepstin*. He told Harrington that there was formerly a rancheria there. Applegate (1975:39) states that the name referred to a Chumash shrine, but this remains to be verified from Harrington's notes.

### *kashu'nay*

This place was stated to be near Oak Park, according to Luisa Ygnacio, near where Juan Sáve's saloon was located. In another placename note from Fernando Librado, Juan Sáve's saloon was mentioned to be located at the "Mission Creek crossing." This probably refers to the vicinity of De la Vina and Alamar, near where the old stage road crossed Mission Creek (Tompkins 1982:34-35). Luisa Ygnacio's son, Pedro, who lived in Mission Canyon, told Harrington that *kashu'nay* was located below the Mission in the lowlands. All of these identifications seem to point to the region just north of Oak Park along Mission Creek. The name meant "sumac place," because the plant *shunay*, or sumac (*Rhus trilobata*) used in basket-making, could be found there. (Jan Timbrook, personal communication). Luisa told Harrington that the area was used for collecting another type of plant called *escoba* in Spanish, used for making *chiquihuite*, a type of wicker basket.



Pedro Ygnacio and Henry Allen Smith, about 1932

Virginia Rose Smith



*Yoquini*

The next placename we encounter as we move up Mission Creek comes to us from Mission Period documents, rather than from Chumash consultants interviewed by Harrington. This is the locality known as *Yoquini*, called by the Spanish missionaries, "San Estevan," where the agricultural fields closest to the mission were situated. The "Book of Planting, Harvesting, and Animal Husbandry," covering the years 1787 to 1807, records the sowing and harvests of Mission Santa Barbara. In the early years of the mission's existence, names of the agricultural fields were not entered, but beginning in 1798, the different farms and ranch outposts of the mission are differentiated in the record keeping. *Yoquini* is mentioned as a locality where wheat, corn, beans, and garbanzos were raised. The exact location of *Yoquini* is described in a pamphlet published by the Old Mission in 1895:

*Tokeene* [sic] or *San Estevan* is all that land north of the present stage road, beginning west of the Arroyo "Pedragoso" [Mission Creek], at the new bridge, and continuing to the Arroyo del Burro. This plain was very fertile. The foundation of a large stone wall may yet be seen a little beyond the bridge west of Pedragoso. This was a large corral for various purposes, principally for tame horses (O'Keefe 1895:17).

*'axtayuxash*

*'axtayuxash* means "islay," referring to the wild cherry pits collected for food by the Chumash (Applegate 1975:25; Whistler 1980:5). Two of Harrington's Chumash consultants knew of a place by this name where some islay bushes were located near the Old Mission. Juan Justo said the place was "where [the] bridge is by [the] Mission. There was . . . islay there formerly just in [the] gap." Luisa Ygnacio described two places known by this name. One was "where [the] trail or road used to go up to [the] Mission, back of Miss Blake's house. [There] were bushes of islay there" (Harrington n.d.).

*sixi'm hul'ashk'a'*

This placename means "Coyote's storage basket (*xi'm*)" and referred to a rock near a spring (Applegate 1975:41). Luisa Ygnacio stated that *sixi'm hul'ashk'a'* was a place where Fr. Antonio Jimeno used to plant his garden just below her son Pedro's ranch in Mission Canyon. Juan Justo, who was much younger than Luisa and therefore not as familiar with old placenames, told Harrington that *sixi'm hul'ashk'a'* was "somewhere at the foot of Arlington Heights hill, but that he did not remember whether it was by the end of De la Guerra street or just which street. It was a spring, and was situated where there used to be a vineyard." Luisa disagreed with Juan Justo's identification, implying that he had confused *sixi'm hul'ashk'a'* with another place named *si'onatsk'a'*, which was located near the old Catholic cemetery on Arlington Heights [now called the Riviera]" (Harrington n.d.).

*ku'lalam*

Kroeber (1925:552) gave the name *Kulalama* as the name of a place near the Old Mission, apparently based on information that the name was once applied to Pedregosa" (Mission) creek (Harrington n.d.). Luisa Ygnacio stated that the word *ku'lalam* might refer to any arroyo and did not refer to Mission Creek specifically.

*monushmu*

Juan Justo told Harrington that *monushmu* was a name for Arlington Heights



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hill (the Riviera). Luisa Ygnacio described the location as Rattlesnake Canyon, which runs along the north side of Riviera hill. Applegate (1975:37) translates *monushmu* as "paint." This agrees with some of Harrington's consultants who describe *monushmu* as a reddish pigment (Hudson and Blackburn 1985:315; Harrington n.d.). Luisa Ygnacio also described medicinal and magical uses for *monushmu*. The identification of *monushmu* with Rattlesnake Canyon may refer to a mineral deposit where the Chumash obtained this substance. It is not inconceivable that the reddish, iron oxide-stained soil of the Sespe Formation, which outcrops along the foot of the Santa Ynez Mountains, may be what is described.

### *hushlikayi hulxshap*

This placename was provided to Harrington by Juan Justo, referring to the "Cañada de las Viboras" (Rattlesnake Canyon). It is unclear whether Juan Justo was merely translating the modern name into Chumash, but the implication in Harrington's brief note seems to be that the Spanish name, and hence the English name as well, may represent a loan translation from a Chumash original. The Chumash name for rattlesnake was *xshap* (Whistler 1980:81).

### *xana'yan*

The Chumash name most frequently associated with Mission Canyon and the mission site itself is *xana'yan*, which was the village situated in the canyon when the mission was founded. The village name for *xana'yan* has frequently been misspelled as "*Taynayan*" (Caballería y Collé 1892:32; Engelhardt 1923:55; Rogers 1929:85), "*Tanayan*" (Geiger 1965:29), and "*Tenenam*" (Kroeber 1925:553). All of these variations on the original name for Mission Canyon are based on a misreading of the Spanish "J" as "T." The Spanish spelling of *xana'yan* was usually "*Janaya*" or "*Janayan*" (Merriam 1962:195).



Mary Yee and Tomás Aquino Ygnacio

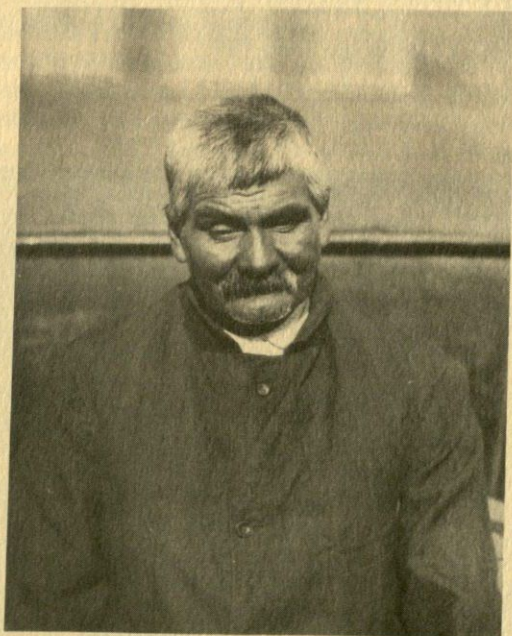
Dick Smith



The archaeological site of *xana'yan* has not yet been positively identified. Rogers believed it to be located at the mission site itself, but this is unlikely, because the missions were never founded in a native rancheria. In 1863 Alexander Taylor published some village identifications based on an interview with a sixty year old Indian named Martín (the husband of María Ygnacia). Martín told Taylor that *Janaya* was "above the Mission" (Taylor 1863). Luisa Ygnacio identified the site as being "the arroyo opposite Pedro's ranch" (Harrington n.d.). Her son Pedro Ygnacio lived below the Botanic Garden (Cullimore 1948:208-211; Wilcoxon 1984:12). Juan Justo mentioned Matías Reyes, another man who lived in the Mission Canyon vicinity, when questioned by Harrington regarding *xana'yan*. Matías Reyes lived a short distance up Rattlesnake Canyon from its confluence with Mission Creek.

*'utapi'qice*

The final placename situated within the Mission Canyon watershed is identified with the site of the Mission Dam, currently located within the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. According to Luisa Ygnacio, the name referred to burning *cacomites* (*Brodiaea* bulbs) and was based on a legend about Coyote. Coyote asked some women who were digging *cacomites* if they would share some with him; some did and some did not. Afterwards when they went up to *'utapi'qice* and began to roast their *cacomites*, Coyote caused the selfish women's to burn (Harrington n.d.).



Juan Justo      Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives



EPILOGUE

Of course the Chumash history of Santa Barbara did not end with the abandonment of *syuxtun* and *xana'yan* in the early nineteenth century. A new Indian ranchería, formed of many Chumash from numerous coastal and inland villages, grew up adjacent to the mission. Dams and aqueducts in Mission Canyon and along Rattlesnake Creek were built by the Chumash to supply water to the mission community. Later in 1824, the Mission Canyon Dam became the site of the skirmish between the Barbareño Indians and the presidio soldiers at the outbreak of the Chumash Revolt.

Following mission secularization in 1833-34, when mission holdings were broken up and the neophytes granted liberty, the Barbareño Chumash population dwindled. A few families remained in the vicinity of the mission, but most settled somewhat apart from the non-Indian population at communities like Cieneguitas near Hope Ranch. It was during secularization times that Luisa Ygnacio was born, who later provided so much Barbareño Chumash lore to Harrington about 1914. Luisa's family was among the last to depart from the adobe houses near the Old Mission, which had been built to house the Indian population. It is fitting that Luisa's last surviving child, Tomás Aquino Ygnacio, a descendant of a *syuxtun* chief, was destined to be laid to rest in 1952 in the friar's vault at the Old Mission, close to the graves of his ancestors.

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Isobel Field, with photo of Stevenson - Santa Barbara Historical Society



# COLONEL WILLIAM WELLS HOLLISTER

By Lois Roberts\*

## INTRODUCTION

Few historical figures are so interwoven with the history of Santa Barbara County as William Wells Hollister (1818-1886). The first to bring a large herd of merino sheep across the continent and to raise them in California for their wool, he was dubbed a pastoral king. He then fought for the rights of the small farmer, for agricultural development, and in his later life contributed to the modernization of the City of Santa Barbara.

Hollister was born into an Ohio pioneer family and inherited 1,000 acres from his father. He was obviously trained to good business sense; and when he went out to California in 1852, he looked beyond the mines and on to the opportunities which lay in sheep raising. His sheep drive of 1853 from Ohio to California and his successful pasturage of those sheep on San Justo Ranch in the San Benito Valley where the town of Hollister now stands is well known. Thanks to the suggestion of his brother Hubbard in 1863, he moved his flocks to Santa Barbara County and the lush pasturage of Lompoc Ranch which had been located by Hubbard's partner, Joseph Wright Cooper. Hollister's entrepreneurship combined with that of his brother, of Cooper, and of the Dibblee brothers, Albert and Thomas, enabled these new partners to buy 220,000 acres of grazing land in northern Santa Barbara County during the next decade. The partnership ended with the death of Hubbard in 1873. William Wells Hollister had already moved to Santa Barbara in 1869, and there he put his energy into railroads, the college, and civic development.<sup>(1)</sup>

Hollister's share of the state's grazing business did not blind him to the injustice of the California fence law on the books from 1850 to 1872. He worked for many years to repeal it and to pass a new law which made the owner of the cattle responsible for damage done to crops by his animals and thus make it safe for farmers to cultivate.<sup>(2)</sup> Hollister also favored Chinese immigration in the 1870's and praised their capacity for hard labor.

The historian and archivist Hubert Howe Bancroft collected interviews of a number of elderly nineteenth-century historical figures. W. W. Hollister recorded his recollections for a Bancroft assistant in 1878, eight years prior to his death. The Bancroft Library owns the original dictation, possibly recorded by Ora Oaks. Jane Wheelwright, a Hollister descendent, has given her permission that we print it here.

\*Dr. Roberts, who secured the following "Statement" of Col. W. W. Hollister from the Bancroft Library for the S. B. Historical Society, received her Ph.D. from U.C.L.A. She has made a number of studies of current California problems. Her publications of special interest to Santa Barbarans include *Anacapa Island* and *The Jesus Maria Rancho*.

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"Statement of a few facts on California from 1852 to 1860," by Col. W. W. Hollister for Bancroft Library. 1878:

### Statement of Col. W. W. Hollister\*

I came to California from Licking County, Ohio, in 1852, and went back and came again in 1853. On the first trip, I came with about fifteen fellow travelers, with ox waggons. We were armed very thoroughly. We had no trouble with the Indians. We found the usual difficulties of travel attending the pioneering of the plains, for that was pretty early, and a good deal of it was pioneering even then. They were always making new roads, changing, hunting out better places for forage for animals, better places for wood and water, so that in the course of a year the whole travel might have changed, running off from the former road in some places eight or ten miles. I think we were about six months crossing, the first time, from May to October. Of the difficulties of the trip, I never thought they amounted to much, though it has been looked upon by many as a very serious undertaking. The failures that have taken place, I think, were more due to want of skill and forethought and experience, than from any real difficulties of the situation. It is very hard to corner a good man on the plains, who keeps command of his wits. I should think it was impossible to put men in a place that I could not get out of, on the plains. The surroundings of the trip were not so bad as generally supposed. I came about eighty miles north of Salt Lake the first time. I crossed the mountains southwest, and came in by the Placerville route, the town then being called Hangtown, and from there to Volcano, thence to Sacramento, and landed at last at San Jose. I arrived here in October, and left about the first of December in the old "Panama," and went home by water. The country here was almost an entirely unbroken grazing field at that time. There was a little improvement at San Jose, a little farming going on, but very few houses. My impression of the country was very favorable. I made up my opinion from the products which I saw on a small scale, mainly from the potatoes and onions, which I saw much surpassed anything I had before seen, and I said naturally, if things grew in that way, it was a great country. I saw from the extent of the country, and its capabilities, that it was a great place for agriculture. I had nothing to do with the mines. My attention at that time was especially directed to the attractiveness of the country, from its great breadth, and the extent of its territory for grazing and sheep husbandry. I made up my mind then that it was hardly possible to find a peer for it in the world for these purposes, in the extent to which the business could be carried, before the land should be given up to culture. I saw that the great gap between the sparse population and that of the dense population which was to follow at some future time, must be filled, and that sheep was the best thing to fill it with. There were very few sheep at that time. The country had a few native sheep, mostly known as Mexican sheep, with very coarse wool and hair. I might relate an incident to show why and how I came to be the pioneer wool-grower of California, which I really am. I had gone out from San Jose, strolling into the country, on foot, and was trying to make up my mind as to the capabilities of the country, and out four or five miles from town I found a pair of Mexican dogs herding about fifteen hundred to two thousand Mexican sheep. Seeing these animals all fat and in fine condition, in November, with apparently nothing to feed upon, I followed them out two or three miles on the plains, to see what they really were living upon. My curiosity was excited. I found them eating the clover burr; that was about all that there appeared to be on the ground, and as I was an

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\*Printed by permission of Mrs. Jane Hollister Wheelwright.



entire stranger to it, I examined the burr, and found it full of nutritious seed; it was a grain in fact, and that accounted for the fatness of the sheep. Seeing those animals there, all in fine condition, herded by two dogs, I thought that a man was smarter than a dog anyway, and concluded that if dogs could handle sheep in that way, and keep them fat all winter, a man could do it surely. I sat down on the ground at that time and place, and studied out for myself my career in California; and that incident made me a sheep man. I of course was not aware of the extent of the grazing territory of California, but I had seen enough to give me an idea of a great deal. I had acquired enough knowledge of California to know that the quantity of land that could be devoted to sheep husbandry was very great indeed. I made up my mind to try to get some acquaintances I had made in California to go home with me to buy sheep to bring back here to raise, choice breeds, better animals than could be found here. I could not get anyone to go with me, and so finally started off myself, early in December, and went home by way of the Isthmus, selected my sheep, and started for California on my second trip. On that trip I was accompanied by my sister and by my brother, J. H. Hollister, now deceased.

### His Second Trip

The second trip was not remarkable for any special incidents or occurrences, but the length of time consumed was very great. Of course, driving the sheep, we were necessarily a great while in getting over, I think fifteen months before we slept in a house, until we landed at our destination in Monterey County. We started with six thousand, and got here with about two thousand, the loss being occasioned by the wear and tear of the long trip. The wearing out of their feet incapacitated the sheep from travelling about to gather food, and they consequently died from starvation. We had to govern ourselves by the amount of food we had for our men, and therefore could not consume more time than we did; with more time, we might have saved more sheep. I have seen a thousand sheep on their knees at once, eating grass, they not being able to stand on account of the bad condition of their feet. The sheep's foot is not so strong as that of other animals, being much more tender. On the plains, the prairie fires had burnt off the grass, and the burnt stubbs pierced the sheep's feet like needles, until they got so sore that they could not stand to eat their food. On that trip, after passing the Rio Virgin River, we were five days without water for one team of our cattle, a five yoke team, and during that time our sheep subsisted upon dry grass only, showing the power of endurance of animals under extremity, with proper and judicious care. We did not lose many there, but the bigger part were lost through the excessive fatigues of the long journey, and the improbability of taking sufficient rest.

On one occasion we had trouble with the Indians. We had a bullock stolen on the Rio Virgin, about midway between Salt Lake and San Bernadino. We followed them up vigorously, after discovering that the animal was lost, and caught about a dozen of them with it, cutting pieces of the flesh off, after having killed it. We fired on them, and they dropped and ran. We captured their weapons, and got quite a number of bows and arrows and quivers. It was said afterwards, by the next train that came after us, that the Indians killed two of the men of that train, in retaliation for two of their men killed by us. Whether we had killed them or not, I don't know. I only know that we fired on them, and none were left on the ground when they escaped. We were at one time surrounded by seventy-five or a hundred of the Piutes, and they showed some ill will, but did us no harm.

I located in Monterey County, near the old Mission of San Juan de Castro. [The



Mission in Monterey County was Misión de San Carlos Borromeo del Puerto de Monterey.]

The journey across the plains was not a formidable thing from the necessary difficulties of the passage, but from the inexperience, ignorance and stupidity of the emigrants was often disastrous enough. They did not seem to have any idea how to take care of themselves. They would rush into streams of water which were swollen from the rains, at great risk, when by waiting a few days for the water to recede, they could have crossed without danger. Like many of the streams of California, these were full of quick-sands and bogs and pits, up to the neck, and so muddy that nothing could be seen, and they were therefore more or less dangerous. Men would frequently rush into these streams as if they were crazy. The masses seemed to be impelled by so intense a desire to get through that they lost all idea of what was necessary to guard against these contingencies. A sort of fear seemed to be common to men on the plains, and based on what I cannot conceive, for there never seemed to be anything on the plains that they could not surmount. I found myself, a boy almost, followed by old men, who came to me for counsel and for encouragement. I never had been in such a place before, but I said to myself, "These animals have got to be saved, because our lives depend upon them." The great secret of success in crossing the plains was just simply the care of the animals, seeing that they always had food. There was considerable difficulty with men on the plains in the two years that I crossed from what they called cholera; but I think it was simply cholera-morbus and dysentery, induced by change of water, and perhaps bad water. The river water of the Platte was always good, or generally so, the best water in the route; yet they would go out to the lowlands, and dig holes in the ground, and drink the water that percolated through the alkaline soils, and a great many got sick, and a good many died.

I finally bought a rancho near Monterey, in connection with Flint, Bixby and Co. and sold out in 1869 and went to Santa Barbara.

### The Fence Question

One incident connected with my life in California is my participation in the conflict on the fence question. That is a very important matter, and one in which I have been chief. I have been the champion of the trespass laws against the fence laws. Early in my California life I became convinced of the idea of the enormous inequity of the fence statute, a statute *per se* wicked, wrong, bad. The fence statute is a law that forces a citizen to build a fortification literally round his premises, before he can enjoy the fruits of his labor. It forces him to build a fence round his property, if he wishes to enjoy his own property. Otherwise, if trespassed upon by cattle, he has no redress. It was that enforced fencing which constitutes, in my mind, a great offence against the citizens in general. It was a stupid pattern of a bad law in older states, and was enacted as one of the first laws in this state, probably began with the Constitution. Most of the older states had the fence law. I wrote early on the subject, and followed it up by conversation and writing for many years, and went to Sacramento several times, seeking to influence legislation in order to break down the fence laws. We finally succeeded in bringing in several of the counties of the state. We had to make it special in order to get it through at all. We got in first the counties of Sacramento, Solano, Yolo, Marin, and Yuba. Those were the counties that came in, in the movement against the fence law. These counties passed Trespass laws, which virtually abolished the fence laws. It made a person who owned an animal responsible for any damages that the animal might do on any other man's premises, regardless of fences or the absence of them. After these counties had taken this action, as time passed,



from session to session of the legislature, other counties came in, until at last all the agricultural counties of the state had come under the operation of the trespass laws. The old law remains, but the county laws prevail. A good principle of law is never bad anywhere, and it was a great pity that the state could not have passed the law that the counties did, for the whole state. I don't think any one thing had done more to start the settlement of the country, and make it difficult for the true agriculturist than this old iniquitous fence statute. While it existed, it was an almost impossible barrier, southward at least, to the true tillers of the soil, the one hundred and sixty acre men. The expense of fencing was so great for persons remote from the redwoods, with the then difficult transportation, almost impossible transportation of material, because all of the material used for fence building at the south had to go from the north southward, that it was impossible for the hundred and sixty acre men to compete with the purchasers of land who sought the acquisition of territory solely for grazing purposes, and consequently the plough, which was the great mover of commerce, was barred in its progress by the mere grazier, who could not add one dollar to the commerce of the country where the farmer could add five. It was a good long fight before we could get anything passed in opposition to the fence law. I think it is about twelve or fifteen years since the first trespass laws were passed by the counties of Solano and the other above mentioned. It is difficult to conceive of the loss to the county that grew out of the application of that one iniquitous statute. The one hundred and sixty acre men, the true movers of the commerce of the country, were barred from the purchase of cheap lands, they could not get them whilst they were cheap. It was hard to think that a man could be consumed by his neighbor, and the law not protect him in the least degree. You can hardly count the millions that have been lost to the county by the application of that bad principle of law. The chief opponents of the trespass laws were the cattle men; they had nothing but cattle, and the whole country was given up to the growth of cattle when we came here. It was devoted mostly to the raising of cattle and horses, and the chief exports of the country were hides and tallow, a very primitive sort of life, and it did not amount to much. Until the plough came to be common in California, the country was devoted to grazing, and its whole life was what we called pastoral. A man wishing to begin agriculture, had to commence it in the midst of cattle ranges. We had to fight these cattlemen; it was the civilized against the half civilized. Both the old rancheros, the native men, and the new, the Americans who adopted the pastoral life of the natives, were bitter against the trespass laws. The Americans became the strongest against the trespass laws, the half-civilized against the civilized. There were not many Americans engaged in the cattle business, but a few who came here before '49 and had become quite prominent, such men as Stearns of Los Angeles, and Sparks of Santa Barbara, and Capt. Liese of Monterey, and a few others who had drifted in here, married with the natives, and become quite prominent.

### The Squatter Problem

One trouble that the country has felt, from the beginning almost, has been the presence of squatters, men regardless of law, who didn't care for the ownership of property and settled themselves everywhere, and being voters, their influence was felt in Washington very much to the retarding of the final settlement of the land claims of California. There was a large class of that character all over the state, a great many squatters. The squatter would squat anywhere, he didn't care where, and he did all that he could to damage the land claims of California. He came in to fight, to contest the claims of actual settlers. He would get up the most unheard of claims to retard the settlement of land grants, and would fabricate all sorts of spurious testimony in support of them. The real bonafide settlers



suffered a great deal from the squatters; they wasted their lives in conflicts, when land claims ought to have been speedily settled, when Congress ought to have given them peaceful titles. They did not wish to waste their time in cultivating land that might not belong to them afterwards, and were kept in doubt and perplexity. The squatters just simply fought for the sake of blackmailing, without any just claim whatever. This has been a great injury to the state.

I think the people began to understand that agriculture was a safe thing in California not much before 1860. Prior to that time the general sentiment was that it was not a country especially fitted for agriculture. But I settled it in my mind to the contrary the first time I came here, settled it very positively and emphatically, when I saw that wherever nature could produce a good crop of grass the farmer could produce a good crop of grain by ploughing. I initiated that idea about 1860.

Spelling has been copied as interviewer wrote it.



# FANNY STEVENSON, MISTRESS OF STONEHEDGE

By Kathryn E. Marriott\*

Santa Barbara has always been attractive to people sufficiently well known to be called celebrities. Writers, artists, actors, musicians, politicians, world travelers, and heads of railroads, banks, and corporations have for at least a hundred years been enjoying the beautiful scenery and perfect climate of California's coast from Carpinteria to the Santa Ynez Valley.

One such famous person was Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson, the wife of the Scottish author of such classics as *Treasure Island*, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Kidnapped*, and *Child's Garden of Verses*. Fanny Stevenson spent the last years of her life in Montecito preparing her husband's works for publication, looking after her investments, enjoying the community's cultural offerings, tending her flowers, and sharing the lives of her son and daughter and their families.

In 1896, two years after the death of her husband, Fanny sold Vailima, their estate in Samoa, and returned to San Francisco, where she had lived before her marriage to Stevenson. There she bought a piece of land and proceeded to have a house built upon it. While waiting for her home to be completed, she acquired some additional California property; Vanumanutagi, a small ranch near Gilroy, and El Sausal, on the edge of the Pacific, six miles from Ensenada. For the next ten years she divided her time among her three homes, breaking the pattern with an occasional trip abroad.

Mrs. Stevenson's decision to move to Santa Barbara was the result of a combination of fate and chance.

Fate crossed Fanny's path as she was passing through Santa Barbara on her way back to San Francisco from Lower California on April 18, 1906, when she heard rumors of the earthquake that had brought disaster to her city. The train stopped at Salinas; Fanny went from there to her Gilroy ranch. Her secretary, Edward Salisbury Field, who had been traveling with her, went on to San Francisco to check on Fanny's home. He and her nephews managed to save the home from the fire that followed the quake; the quake itself had caused some relatively minor damage to the house. A chimney had toppled and had broken through the roof, necessitating some repairs both outside and inside.

Fatigued by all of the stress and strain she had experienced as a result of the earthquake, Fanny decided she needed a change in scenery, so with Lloyd Osbourne, her son by a previous marriage, and Mr. Field she set sail in November for Europe. At Monte Carlo chance intervened. The Stevenson party met a woman from California. This person raved about the attributes of Santa Barbara, told Fanny about Stonehedge, a Montecito estate said to be haunted by the ghost of a beautiful countess, and advised her to buy it.

On her return from Europe, Fanny sold her San Francisco home and purchased Stonehedge. She became the third owner of the house and its adjoining seven acres. Designed by architect Thomas Nixon, the "Queen Anne style of villa" had been built for I. R. Baxley in 1878. It cost about \$4500. A retired steamboat captain, A. L. Anderson, bought the well-developed grounds, moving here in the mid-1880's. When she bought it, Fanny had been advised to tear down the house and rebuild it, but to its new owner the house on Hot Springs Road was a challenge. She undertook its renovation with the same zeal that had served her so well when she had planned and supervised the construction of Vailima. If there had ever been a ghost on the premises, it surely left when Fanny and her workmen wrought the changes they had undertaken.

When she had reworked the house to her satisfaction, Fanny turned her attention to

\*Miss Marriott is a retired City College instructor who has contributed articles to *Noticias* previously.





Mrs. R. L. Stevenson - Printed by permission of the Huntington Library (Photo file 7715)



the grounds. With the help of Luther Burbank, whom she consulted about what she should plant, and her two Japanese gardeners, she converted the land around her home into a tropical garden. In it she had fashioned a small shrine, where she daily placed fresh blooms in memory of Louis. (Fanny always called her husband Louis.)

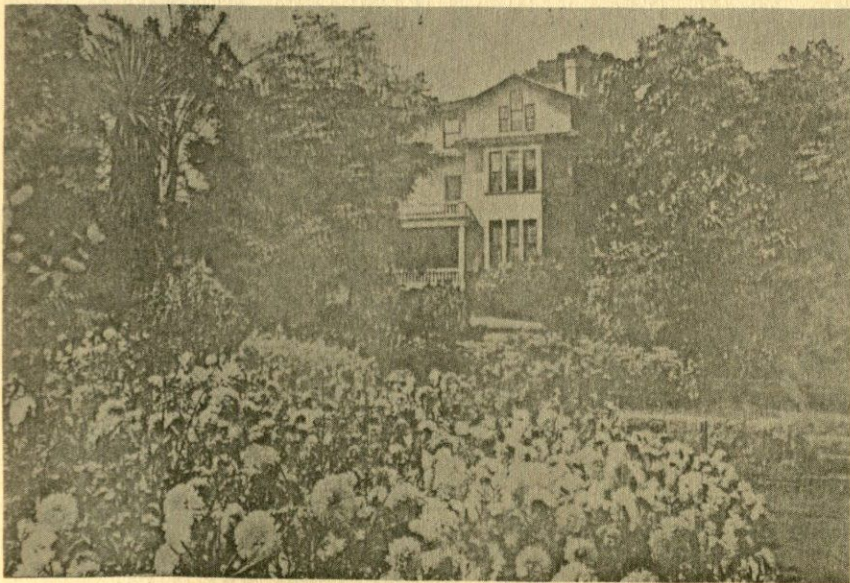
There is a story about some Scottish tourists who drove to Stonehedge to see where the widow (a word she never used) of their famous countryman lived. They spied her working in her yard and spoke to her. When she learned where they had come from and why, she welcomed them warmly. On their departure, she filled their car with the prettiest of her flowers.

When she wasn't digging in her garden or picking flowers to share with her friends, Fanny worked on the prefaces she had promised Scribner's she would write for a complete edition of her husband's works, collected and arranged his unpublished material, worked on journals she had kept when she and Louis were on the extensive voyages they took before settling in Samoa, carried on the correspondence expected of a person in her position, and did everything within her power to advance and secure the reputation of Robert Louis Stevenson as an author of significance.

At Stonehedge Fanny was busy and content. For recreation she continued to visit her Gilroy ranch and El Sausal. She went to Mexico and to Palm Springs. Closer to home was her property between Summerland and Carpinteria, twelve acres of beach land known as La Serena, which she had purchased in June of 1910. Her ocean front footage included a small wharf and a bungalow. Fanny liked to go to La Serena to fish. One suspects it may have reminded her of Samoa.

Mrs. Stevenson enjoyed shopping in Santa Barbara, where she was always approached by five or six clerks ready and anxious to wait on her. She could never understand why her appearance in a store caused such a furor.

She participated in Santa Barbara's cultural life by attending its theatrical and musical productions. On one occasion, when a young singer, whom she had encouraged, was giving



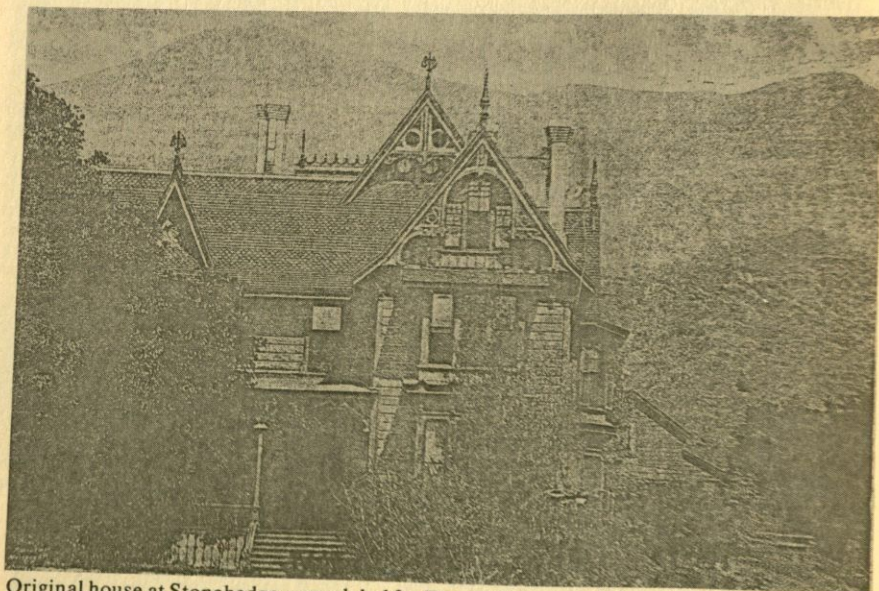
Mrs. R. L. Stevenson's home - Postcard collection, Santa Barbara Historical Society



a concert, he directed his words about a beautiful woman so obviously to her that she retreated behind the feathers of her fan to escape his gaze and that of the others in the audience who noticed where he was looking. A legendary beauty, Fanny was already sixty-six years old when she moved to Montecito. When she was forty, a good ten years older than her young husband, who rated her a perfect "10" for beauty; her mother called her a tiger lily; a poet compared her essence to the glow of a fiery ruby; her father-in-law described her as a stormy petrel. The natives of Samoa saw her as Aoelele, a flying cloud; a stranger, catching a glimpse of her is reported to have nominated her the one woman a man would be willing to die for. Having a young singer acclaim her beauty during a concert in Santa Barbara no doubt pleased her, but it could hardly have been a new experience.

The Santa Barbara Directory for 1906 listed the population of Montecito as a record 927 persons. Santa Barbara's city population in the year 1905-06 rose from 11,483 to 11,672, a gain of 189 residents. Sensing that property values would rise with increased demand, Fanny interrupted her literary pursuits, her gardening and her other rewarding activities long enough to invest her money in several pieces of local real estate.

In addition to Stonehedge and La Serena, she came to own what was known as the Dinsmore property in Montecito. She bought a commercial building in downtown Santa Barbara in February, 1911. It consisted of fifty feet of the Garland frontage in block 158 on State Street between Canon Perdido and Carrillo. The lot, two hundred and twenty-five feet deep, controlled the right of way to Chapala. The space was occupied by a one-story frame building, then leased to photographer N. H. Reed and W. W. Osborne, book dealer. Mrs. Stevenson paid \$20,000 for this piece of property. In January of 1959, Mrs. Mary Strong, widow of Austin Strong, Fanny's grandson, sold the property for approximately \$100,000. In 1912 she built Walton's Store on State Street between De la Guerra and Canon Perdido.



Original house at Stonehedge, remodeled for Fannie Stevenson - *San Francisco Journal of Commerce* - Santa Barbara edition, 1887



### Fanny Stevenson's Family

Although Fanny claimed that she had always wanted to have someone take care of her, the way it had worked out was that she was the one who took care of everyone else. Much of her time, therefore, during the eight years she lived in Montecito was spent being a kind of matriarch to the members of her family. From her first marriage to Captain Samuel Osbourne, Fanny had three children. One of these, a son, died when he was five years old. The other son, Lloyd, and the daughter Belle, later known as Isobel, were each in one way or another quite dependent upon her even though both were extraordinarily capable and talented.

Age with its toll of failing health finally caught up with Fanny Stevenson. She had been to Palm Springs for relief from a respiratory ailment from which she had been suffering. Feeling better, she returned to Stonehedge. Shortly afterward, on the morning of February 18, 1914, when her maid went into her bedroom to waken her, she found her unconscious. The doctor, who was her friend and neighbor, came as soon as he was called, but there was nothing he could do. She died later that same day.

Son Lloyd left New York for Montecito as soon as he received the news. Floods caused by unusually heavy rains of that year had washed away bridges and roads making traveling so hazardous that his arrival was delayed. Arrangements for her funeral services, which were held in San Francisco, were made as soon as Lloyd reached Montecito.

Belle was out of the country on a trip. The cable notifying her of her mother's death did not reach her in time to return for the San Francisco services, but it was she who somewhat over a year later transported Fanny's ashes to Samoa, where on June 22, 1915, they were placed in the tomb of her husband, Robert Louis Stevenson, on Mount Vaea on the grounds of Vailima.

### The Children's Santa Barbara Connections

After their mother's death, her children, and in time, their children looked upon Santa Barbara and Carpinteria as a kind of home base. Though it was necessary for them to be elsewhere for varying periods of time, they continued to own property and to be in residence when possible. If they couldn't live here, they came frequently to visit family members who did.

Belle, who later preferred to be called Isobel, maintained homes in Montecito and La Serena. She was occupying a cottage at El Mirasol Hotel when she died in 1953 at almost 95 years of age. She is buried at Forest Lawn next to her second husband, Edward Salisbury Field, who had served as her mother's secretary and who married Isobel shortly after Fanny died. He became a successful playwright and screen writer. Isobel's experiences as a child, as a young wife and mother, and as part of the Stevenson household in Samoa are recorded in her biography, *This Life I've Loved*.

Isobel's son, Austin Strong, a landscape architect turned author, wrote several successful plays for the New York stage. One of them, *Seventh Heaven*, became a movie starring Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell. The role earned an Oscar for Janet Gaynor. Austin was a frequent visitor to Montecito, La Serena and Santa Barbara. He died a few months before his mother and is buried in Rhode Island.

Lloyd Osbourne, for whom Stevenson wrote *Treasure Island*, is buried in Carpinteria. A writer, his work took him to many places, but he spent his last years with family members in Montecito and Carpinteria. He died in 1947. Lloyd's son, Lou, and Lou's wife, Clara are buried next to Lloyd. Their daughter, Fanny Stevenson's great granddaughter, still lives in Montecito.



Robert Louis Stevenson wrote a poem entitled "To My Wife." After his death it was found among the sheets of the manuscript of his unfinished *Weir of Hermiston*. Apparently intended for the dedication of the novel, which Stevenson felt was the best he had written, the poem expressed his gratitude to Fanny and acknowledges his debt to her. Following is the second stanza:

Take thou the writing: thin it is. For who  
 Burnished the sword, blew out the drowsy coal,  
 Held still the target higher chary of praise  
 And prodigal of censure—who but thou?  
 So now, in the end, if this at least be good,  
 If any deed be done, if any fire  
 Burn in the imperfect page, praise be thine.

Fanny's life and the memory of her have touched many people in many places, not the least of which has been Santa Barbara, where she came because of an earthquake and a rumor of the presence of a ghost and stayed because it suited her.

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## ISOBEL FIELD

By Stella Haverland Rouse\*

To Isobel Field, author of *This Life I've Loved*, her island friends gave the name of "Teuila,"—one who makes the ugly beautiful. She says, "The days that are blank in my memory are the uninteresting or dreary ones;" those she forgot. She, "the decorator," makes not only the many pleasant incidents, but the unhappy ones, interesting. Mrs. Field's father, when she was still quite young, told her to "enjoy the moment, yesterday is past, tomorrow hasn't come." It is this ability to make the most of every event that gives her narrative its charm.

A reviewer has summarized the essence of Mrs. Field's book thus: "It is not only because of Stevenson that Isobel Field's autobiography is a rare and entrancing book. It is, in large part, because of Mrs. Field herself. It is because in an existence full of diverse, unpredictable, and to a lesser soul, often confounding, events, she kept undimmed and undaunted the glowing fire of life."

Most librarians have read the story of her full, rich existence. She gives us a vivid picture of romantic and sometimes tragic days in the Nevada mining country. Then in San Francisco, little dreaming she would some day see it through the eyes of Stevenson in his delightful sketches, she played on its rocky beaches. She tells how her father, reported killed by the Indians, came home "like a story book," and later really disappeared forever. She recalls her early dislike of the boring methods of education then employed, and her joy in being sent to an art school in San Francisco, and later, in Europe. Some of the most enjoyable experiences of her youth were her visits to the theater, where she "learned to appreciate fine acting," and her participation in school dramatic entertainments.

After her art education in Europe, where she and her mother first met Robert Louis Stevenson, she returned to California, and married a prominent young artist, Joe Strong. (Her name Field was acquired through a later marriage to Salisbury Field.) Stevenson and her mother were married in Monterey. After spending a "happy-go-lucky, jolly life" in the Latin quarter of San Francisco, Isobel and Joe Strong sailed for Honolulu. There, besides giving instructions in art, she designed a coat of arms for King Kalakaua, and the Star of the Royal Order of Oceania. This order was conferred upon her later for having delivered an important message to the King in a political crisis.

### Mrs. Field's Life in Samoa

Then, when Stevenson and her mother went to Samoa, Mrs. Field, after spending some time in Sydney, went to live in the Stevenson household. There she assisted Stevenson in his writing. In recalling her days working as amanuensis for Stevenson Mrs. Field says, "I was just a machine helping Stevenson." But genius requires a good machine, and Mrs. Field supplied that need.

Mrs. Stevenson was so clever that she was able to assist the author in other ways. "She recognized her husband's literary ability, and while she discussed his work with interest, she did not criticize it in the harsh sense of the word," says Mrs. Field.

"She was a soft-spoken, tactful person, and as Edmund Gosse said, 'dark and rich hearted, like a wonderful wine-red jewel.'" "Stevenson," Mrs. Field added, "could not have written of his wife as he did had she been less noble:

"Steel-true and blade-straight

.....

\*This sketch was the result of an interview with Isobel Field at Serena in 1938. It appeared in a Los Angeles trade publication circulated among librarians.



Honor, anger, valor, fire

.....

A love that life could never tire

.....

Teacher, tender comrade, wife

A fellow-farer true through life."

Mrs. Field's early coaching by her mother for school recitations and amateur performances no doubt gave her her early appreciation of the dramatic. The reading of many exciting tales in her youth, and the adventurous life in the Nevada and California of that era furnished the girl with material for exciting tales which she narrated as personal experiences to her young companions.

"That was drawing the long bow," she laughed, when I mentioned those stories to her. But that practice, and her companionship with people who enjoyed fabricating and dramatizing incidents, gave her a wonderful outlet for her natural story-telling talent. She often had an opportunity to see Stevenson's stories "in the making." "Sire de Maletroit's Door," she once said, developed from their observation together of a door reflected in the flames on the hearth.

Mrs. Field has always been intimately associated with literary people: Stevenson, Nellie Van de Grift Sanchez, her aunt, whose books are valuable Californiana; her mother; Lloyd Osbourne, who collaborated with Stevenson; and finally her son, Austin Strong, and her husband, Salisbury Field, two noted dramatists.

She has employed her gift for narrative in many ways. Years ago she wrote accounts of many of her experience for Scribner's, Muncey's, and other popular literary magazines. After the death of Stevenson, she was booked by Major Pond's New York lecture bureau to present talks on Stevenson in many eastern cities, including New York, Philadelphia and Boston.

"I didn't have to worry about an audience," she smiled, "for most of my talks were before women's clubs, and the members had to come." They might have been forced to attend, but they must all have been glad of the opportunity, once they heard her witty and vivid narratives.

Mrs. Field's American ancestry dates back to 1642, when immigrants from Sweden came to settle on the Delaware River. These newcomers were so gentle and kindhearted that they made no history, she says, but through their friendliness toward the Indians, they enabled Penn to settle without difficulty. Another ancestor came from Holland in the late 1600's, and another was a direct descendant of the guide who led Boone's expedition into Kentucky. One can imagine, then, Mrs. Field's indignation on one occasion when she was asked by an immigration official what nationality she was.

"American," she replied.

Noting, probably, her very dark eyes, and thinking they must have been "imported" recently, the officer then asked, "What was your grandfather?"

"American."

Finally, in despair, and feeling sorry for the long line of passengers behind her, she acknowledged that she had some Dutch ancestors. But she upheld her insistence that she was American by writing a letter of protest to Washington, to which she received a courteous apology. Recently, when the Swedish Society was celebrating the founding of the Delaware colony, Mrs. Field was invited to join it.

Mrs. Field's dark eyes, Hawaiian friends told her, gave her a gypsy-like appearance. So, for their entertainment she designed a deck of fortune-telling cards.

"I enjoy telling fortunes," she says, "because I believe in them." Many years later a



member of the firm of a playing card company was so fascinated by the cards that he made arrangements to have them printed for sale.

### An Energetic Person

No one who observed Mrs. Field's light, graceful steps as she took me from room to room to view her treasures, her quick glance, or her powers of observation, her vivid memory, or quick wit, would guess that she will soon celebrate her eightieth birthday. She enjoys being old because she has the freedom of doing as she pleases, which often is denied to youth. Actions and habits considered, perhaps, bad taste in a young woman are tolerated in elders, she laughed. And so, now, without formality of an introduction, she can speak to anyone interesting she sees. She can wear the vivid colors she loves, a black peasant dress, embroidered in gay colors, and silk Chinese house slippers at home.

One of the most striking features of her portrait by Albert Herter is the number and rarity of her rings. She was wearing them when I visited her. Mrs. Field has always loved jewelry, and now that she is "an old lady," she intends to "be eccentric," as she terms it, and wear as many as she pleases. She indulges her passion for the beautiful by wearing two or three rings on some fingers, and even one on her thumb. But the sapphires, diamonds, rubies, zircons and jade in unusual mountings blend beautifully upon her hands, which she kept busy as she talked, searching for interesting curios, or rolling a cigaret to smoke.

Mrs. Field lives now on a beautiful estate between the ocean and the mountains, and surrounded by many tropical flowers and common plants, too. In plots of land on the cliff over the sea, she may have "cabbages and zinnias together, because they're friendly that way." Below the garden, and just above the sea, she has a beautiful rose-covered pergola, where one may sit, with the roll of the Pacific in his ears, and look past the Santa Barbara Channel Islands into the horizon beyond which lies the land where Stevenson and her mother rest on their peaceful island. "Serena," her home in Santa Barbara, which her mother first purchased in the early 1900's, offers all the calm and beauty that the name connotes. There she entertains worth-while visitors, reads aloud with her son modern plays, and continues to write the story of her life, begun in *This Life I've Loved*.

In Mrs. Field's home are gathered many of the heirlooms, also antique furniture, which belonged to the Stevenson family. And with them are many fascinating treasures collected in all parts of the world: Hawaii, Samoa, and on later trips with Mr. Field to Haiti, the Fiji Islands, and other distant places.

There, too, under a beautiful stained glass window bearing a portion of the inscription on Stevenson's grave,

*Home is the sailor home from the sea,*

*And the hunter, home from the hill,*

are many first editions of Stevenson's works. Another treasure is a replica of the St. Gaudens medallion of Stevenson.

Mrs. Field showed me her prized photographs of devoted friends and notable personages. The photograph of her mother bears out Gosse's description of her. But even then, according to Mrs. Stevenson's sister, no picture ever did her justice. In one of the places of honor stands a photograph of Mrs. Field's son, Austin Strong, who was elected to the Hall of Fame, and in another, that of her husband, Edward Salisbury Field.

To mention the famous people Mrs. Field has known would be to list most of the outstanding names of literature, the theater and art for the past half century. I asked her who



of these persons she remembered most vividly. She smiled, and said that each was outstanding in his own way. "Geniuses have fiery personalities. You recognize them immediately. They need not be beautiful, or handsome, but they all have a quality of distinction. When you see them, even before you know they are important, 'Who's that?' you ask, about anyone outstanding."

### Mrs. Field's Artistic Talents

In her studio is "the kind of work I like to do"—miniature reproductions of interesting places, one of Santa Barbara's El Paseo, with Spanish Senores and Senoritas in the foreground. Another is a replica of Zaca Lake, in Santa Barbara County. Such is her feeling for places, and so dear are memories associated with the lake, that she sold it recently to a family who, she assured herself, would preserve it in its natural beauty.

On the walls of her studio hang her vivid paintings of scenes in the Negro Republic of Haiti. There, too, is the goddess, "Ko Ung," (good luck) with offerings of friends who desire that their requests to the goddess be fulfilled.

It is with reluctance that readers reach the close of Mrs. Field's narrative: "I was sure then, (when Stevenson died in 1894) that this was the end of my best years. I did not dream that a new life and far greater happiness than I had ever known were waiting for me in my native land."

Isobel, then divorced, returned to the United States, and in 1914 married Salisbury Field. Their mothers had attended school together, and when Mr. Field was a young reporter in San Francisco, he came to Mrs. Stevenson with a letter of introduction and became her secretary. These later years were happy ones, for, despite the difference in their ages, she and her husband were very congenial. She wrote little then, for she was more interested in her husband's work. Besides, her talent is artistic, and she devoted herself to painting.

Mr. Field was a handsome, witty man who loved to have striking wearing apparel. One of his friends admired an unusual overcoat he possessed, and asked that it be willed to him. "I couldn't disappoint my pet moth," Mr. Field replied.

### Mrs. Field's Literary World

Speaking of these years, Mrs. Field said, "I had an experience few women have had in this world. Twice my son and my husband had successes on Broadway at the same time. Austin Strong's *Three Wise Fools* was playing while Mr. Field's *Wedding Bells* was being presented at another theater. Later, *Seventh Heaven* and *Zander the Great* were running simultaneously.

Among Mrs. Field's most thrilling moments were those when on the opening night of a play by her husband or son the first laugh rippled over the audience, and when, after the curtain, the enthusiastic audience cried "Author! author!" until the successful playwright appeared. There was a tension about those nights, however, which made them less enjoyable than playing on the road. Mrs. Field, according to her family, was their mascot, for she, sitting in the audience, led it in laughter, no matter how many times she heard the same joke. The family tried to make light of these agitating moments, and Mr. Field, she recalls, on an opening night in Washington, D.C. was said to have laughed most heartily at his own jokes.

Although Mrs. Field had written *Memories of Vailema* a number of years ago, she had no intention of publishing further memoirs when she began writing them in pencil. Her son and brother frequently requested her to send reminiscences of her early life and



family for their information and pleasure. In Hollywood she recorded people and events for them exclusively. Later, she was persuaded to have the notes typed.

Her husband, on reading the manuscript, declared it should be published. He was greatly disappointed when two publishers refused to print it, giving as their reasons that it "had no public appeal," and that "Stevenson's vogue had gone out." It was not until after the death of her husband that the manuscript was accepted. While Mrs. Field was thrilled to have the material published then, she wept that her husband, who had been so enthusiastic about it, could not share her pleasure.

It was published in England, too, and was highly praised in the leading reviewing periodicals. By elephant and airplane, into the colonies of the British Empire went acclaim of her book, and back came orders for it from over the world, and then complimentary letters to the author. She showed me those letters, a huge box of them, with curious stamps and postmarks, in many styles of handwriting, and frequently with as unusual messages. One letter, she told me, had more than forty pages, "poetry, prose, and God knows what all," for it is written so illegibly that she has never been able to decipher it completely.

Among letters which have come from librarians are inquiries regarding the source of the four lines on the title page:

This life I've loved is like a Christmas tree.  
Each day its branches bear new gifts for me,  
All wrapped with love and tied with ribbons gay.  
No wonder that my skies are seldom gray!

Her husband wrote them for her book. The title was an inspiration. One evening she remarked, "I've loved my life." From that statement was evolved the striking "This Life I've Loved."

Many other requests for information concern the old mining days, and San Francisco and Monterey of that romantic era when she first knew them. Regretfully she replies that she was too young to note further characteristics.

Mrs. Field has been asked to speak about Stevenson before many groups. She knows he still is widely read and loved, she says, because of the intelligent questions her listeners ask. His poetry and prose live because he is a true poet:

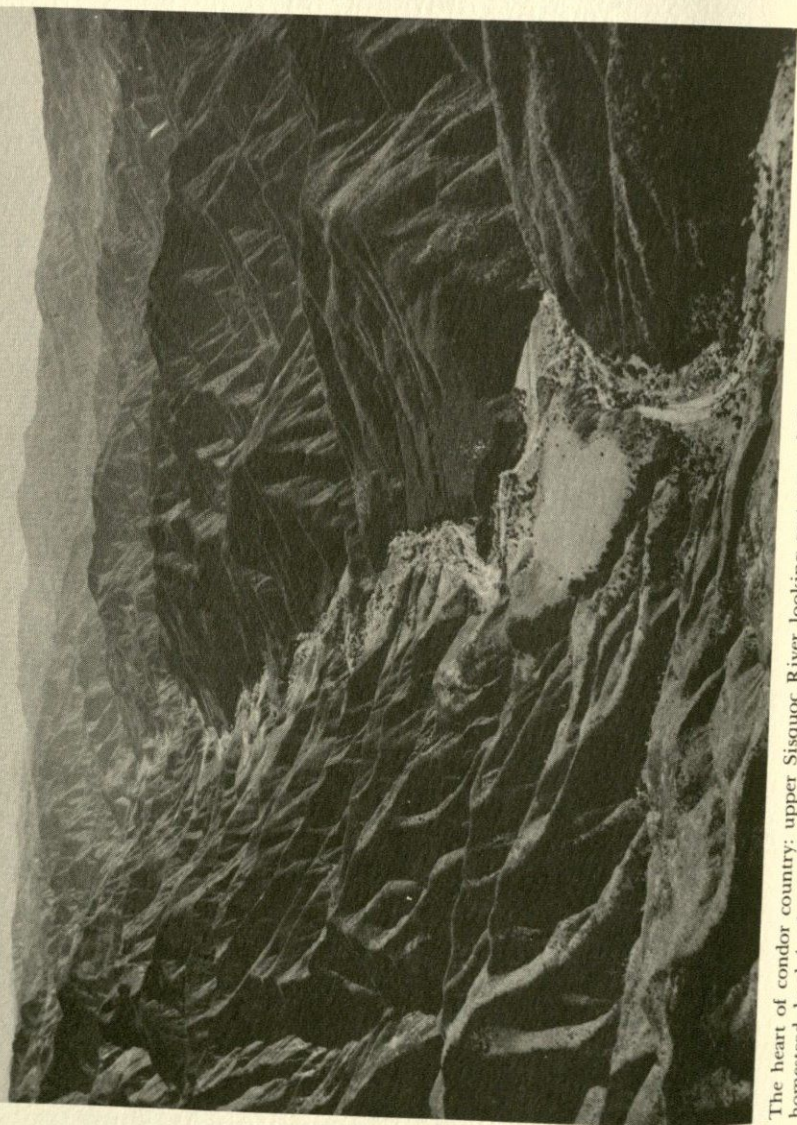
"Bright is the ring of words  
When the right man rings them,  
Fair the fall of songs  
When the singer sings them,"

she concluded.

Mrs. Field had remembered Samoa and its people so affectionately and had described them so enthusiastically to Mr. Field, that when, after her mother's death, they went to place her ashes beside the body of Stevenson on Mount Vaea, she "began to get nervous" for fear that Mr. Field might be disappointed. But he found the land as wonderful as she said. The Samoans welcomed him heartily, and gave him a chief's name, as the natives were calling him "Teuila's man."

I asked Mrs. Field which of the many places she has seen, she enjoyed the most. She quoted Loti in reply, "I am homesick as only the traveler knows for so many places." "I've been lucky," she continued, "to have lived in these places before they changed—Monterey before the wealthy came, Honolulu under the Empire, Samoa before the natives were spoiled. I was there, as people would say, 'in the good old days.'" But any days, with Mrs. Field's keen appreciation of persons and places would be the "good old days" to her.





The heart of condor country: upper Sisuoc River looking east toward Big Pine Mountain, old Adolf Willmann homestead land in foreground, condor sanctuary at right in middle distance. The Sisuoc has recently been recommended for protection under the national Wild and scenic Rivers Act.

Wilderness Society



## "MR. SANTA BARBARA COUNTY"

Compiled from the files of the Santa Barbara *News-Press*,  
Easton family papers, personal interviews, and written by

Micheal Taylor\*

Robert Eastman Easton was born September 15, 1875, in Santa Cruz, to the Rev. Giles Alexander Easton and Mary Gushee Easton. His maternal grandfather came to California as a gold hunter in '49.

As the youngest son in a poor minister's family he grew up in Santa Cruz, Benicia and Berkeley. Among his early jobs were clerking in a grocery, working at the Shafter Ranch at Olema in Marin County, and riding as a jockey in the state fair. Small, wiry, he became an accomplished horseman and acquired a knowledge of ranching which would prove useful later.

He graduated with honors from the "Berkeley Gymnasium," a name for educational institutions which is common in Europe and does not have the athletic connotation of today. He then entered the University of California, where he belonged to the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity.

Easton distinguished himself scholastically, at the same time playing flute in the UC marching band and serving as a coxswain of the first UC crew. One of his classmates was Ethel Olney, whom he would marry seventeen years later.

He graduated with honors in civil engineering in 1897, and it was as a civil engineer that he first saw the Santa Barbara-Ventura area, where he supervised a crew of men and mules with Fresno scrapers who built an approach fill to the Santa Clara River bridge between Oxnard and Ventura. The fill is still in use on the U.S. 101 bridge.

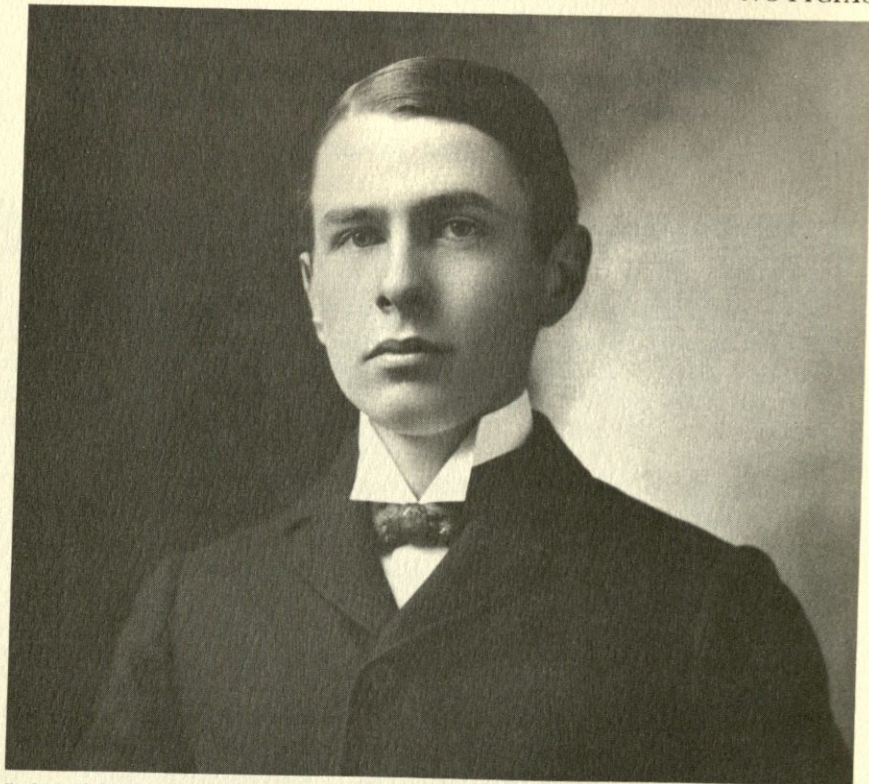
Thomas B. Bishop of San Francisco, co-owner of the Glen Annie Ranch in Goleta Valley and the 35,486 acre Sisquoc land grant at the head of the Santa Maria Valley, and his partner, John T. Porter of Watsonville, commissioned Easton to supervise a survey of the boundaries of the Sisquoc property which Governor Pio Pico had granted to Maria Antonia Dominguez de Caballero in 1845.

In the summer of 1899, Easton spent a month on the ranch in preliminary review and on January 1, 1900, the first day of a new century, became at age 24 its de facto superintendent-manager. Studying records of former surveys he found a corner marker, a copper spike in an ancient oak tree which had barked over. From this beginning he guided the new survey which placed the north boundary of the ranch about one-fourth mile farther northward, thus overlapping into homestead lands along the upper Sisquoc River claimed by George, Henry and William Tunnell and Edward Forrester.

Contrary to rumors that he would be shot on sight if he attempted to dispossess the settlers, Easton made friends with them, found them willing to negotiate and purchased their lands for \$5 an acre. Subsequently most

\*Michael Taylor is the pseudonym of a long-time friend of Robert E. Easton. Unless otherwise credited, Robert O. Easton furnished the photographs for both stories.





Robert E. Easton as a U.C. Berkeley undergraduate, 1895.

other homestead lands in the upper Sisquoc River region, including those of William Forrester, H.P. Wells, Adolf Willmann and Edward and Josiah T. Montgomery, were purchased—adding some 3200 acres to the ranch at a total expense of \$20,000. A later purchase of 2200 acres of adjoining Rancho Tinaquaic in Foxen Canyon brought total Sisquoc Ranch acreage to 41,235.

### **Ranch Superintendent**

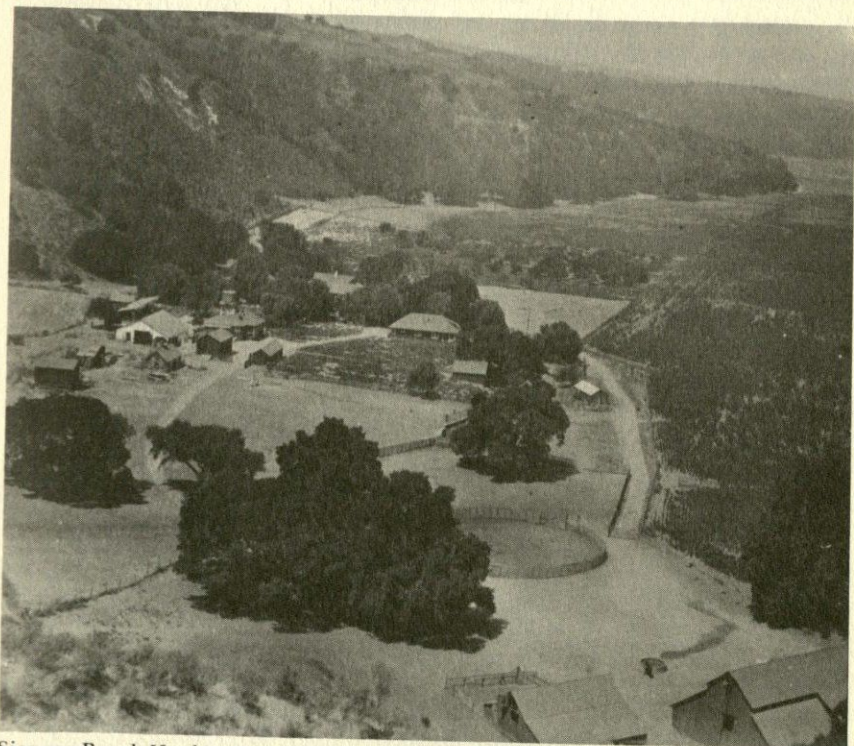
Easton lived at first with the family of Vicente Castro, superintendent prior to his arrival, who remained until 1903 when Easton took full charge. He continued to live on the ranch until 1906 when William J. Rutherford, of a pioneer Goleta family, became superintendent and Easton established residence and an office in Santa Maria from where he acted as ranch manager and secretary of the Sisquoc Investment Company, a corporation established by Bishop and Porter to operate the property.

In these early years Easton traveled into Arizona and Texas to buy cattle, bringing back entire trainloads, unloading them first at La Patera just west of Goleta which was then railhead, and later at Gaviota, and driving them over the passes and across the Santa Ynez Valley to the ranch.

One cold November night his cattle train stopped at the top of a hill in the New Mexico-Arizona high country. Easton, who was riding in the caboose, got out and went up along the cars with a prod pole to "prod up"



animals that had lain down and thus were in danger of injury or death from trampling. He was midway in the long train when it suddenly began to move and gather speed rapidly on the down grade. "I debated whether to try and grab the caboose when it came by or get aboard where I was," Easton said. Deciding to board, he climbed to the top of the nearest car and started back along the catwalk toward the caboose, jumping from car to car. But by now the train was rocking along so fast he had difficulty keeping his footing in the dark and decided to sit down and ride alfresco to the next stop. "It came two hours later. By then I was frozen half stiff. I crossed the Continental Divide on several other occasions but never so memorably."



Sisquoc Ranch Headquarters in the early 1900s, looking west down the Santa Maria Valley.

#### Utilities Executive

In 1906 in association with George S. and Alfred Edwards he formed the Home Telephone Company of Santa Barbara, having met George Edwards in 1904 while both were delegates to the Republican Party convention at Sacramento which nominated Dr. George C. Pardee of Oakland for governor. At this time he expanded his interests further by becoming director of the First National Bank of Santa Maria and becoming associated with the Pinal Dome Oil Company which was developing oil and gas production in the nearby Orcutt Field, then one of the most active in California. It was the site of "Old Maud," the Union Oil Company's celebrated "gusher," which spewed 12,000 barrels a day for days, and when



capped continued spouting through gopher holes and cracks in the ground for hundreds of feet roundabout.

In 1909 with Paul O. Tietzen and James F. Goodwin, prominent Santa Maria businessmen, Easton organized the Santa Maria Gas Company, becoming its secretary and later president, overseeing the extension of service to Guadalupe, Arroyo Grande, San Luis Obispo and eventually Lompoc and Paso Robles.

Meanwhile he had joined the Santa Barbara Club as well as Masonic Lodges in San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria, and the Elks Lodge in San Luis Obispo where he became a life member.

### Riviera Campus

In 1908-09 he was active in the campaign to elect his brother-in-law Warren R. Porter lieutenant governor of California. Governor James N. Gillette soon appointed him to the first board of trustees of the Santa Barbara Normal School of Manual Training and Home Economics. He helped select a Riviera campus site for the new school, which eventually became Santa Barbara State Teachers College, and then the University of California at Santa Barbara. The site was later occupied by Santa Barbara City College and now by Brooks Institute of Photography and other enterprises.

Easton was also appointed trustee of the State Agricultural Society and for four years helped it operate the annual state fair at Sacramento where he had once ridden as jockey.

Becoming acquainted with E.W. Howard of San Francisco, he extended his ranching interests into Madera County by purchasing with Howard 1800 acres of Chowchilla Ranch where they raised cattle and farm crops.



E. Easton with his mother, Sisquoc Ranch house, 1910. Veil and long "dusters" were customary motoring gear.



### Marriage and Tragedy

In April 1914, he married Ethel Olney, daughter of Warren Olney, prominent Bay Area lawyer, mayor of Oakland, 1902-04, and co-founder with John Muir of the Sierra Club which had been organized in Olney's San Francisco office, he serving as its first vice-president. Easton's present to his bride was a shiny new saddle, sitting resplendent among the silverware and other conventional wedding gifts. Some guests murmured that sheltered Ethel was marrying a wild cowboy. She knew otherwise.

At noon on January 6, 1915, Easton and his partner, Howard, stepped into an elevator on the eighth floor of the California-Pacific Building in San Francisco. The crowded elevator's cables broke and it crashed to the basement. Howard and others died as a result. Doctors told Easton he might never walk again because of broken legs and smashed kneecaps. He successfully defied them, thanks in part to a new surgical technique which allowed the shattered tendons of his legs to be spliced with kangaroo tendons. Aided by his wife he struggled to walk with crutches, then with the aid of a cane, eventually without help.

A tireless walker before his accident, he became even more so, habitually walking to and from his office in Santa Maria and later in Santa Barbara covering the two miles downhill and then uphill from his home near the Old Mission to the telephone company building at Chapala and Canon Perdido. This was done partly to keep his injured legs active, partly for the exercise he believed necessary to good health.



Vaqueros, main corral, Sisquoc Ranch, ca. 1910.

At a time when walking was generally looked upon as not only foolish (when you could just as well drive a car) but plebeian, he was considered an oddity and indeed was often the only pedestrian in view.



Everything he achieved afterward was partially an expression of gratitude for surviving an accident fatal to many others.

In 1916 the Santa Barbara Telephone Company was formed, taking over the competing Sunset Company owned by the Bell System and merging it with the Home Telephone Company of Santa Barbara, Easton continuing as director, George B. Bush as president. In 1920, Bush died. Easton with Alfred Edwards borrowed \$50,000 and purchased the common stock of the company, taking in D.A. Sattler as associate. Edwards served as president, Easton as vice-president.

### A New Building

The then telephone company building at the northwest corner of Chapala and De la Guerra was nearly destroyed by the earthquake of 1925 but, walls propped up by telephone poles, it continued to serve the damaged city, as vital lines of communication were kept open.

In 1928 a new building (the present location of General Telephone Company's downtown office) was opened at the southeast corner of Chapala and Canon Perdido. Designed in part by Easton and his wife, notably the Spanish styled main entrance, it was two stories high (a third was added later) and offered the new technology of the dial phone, with Easton now president.

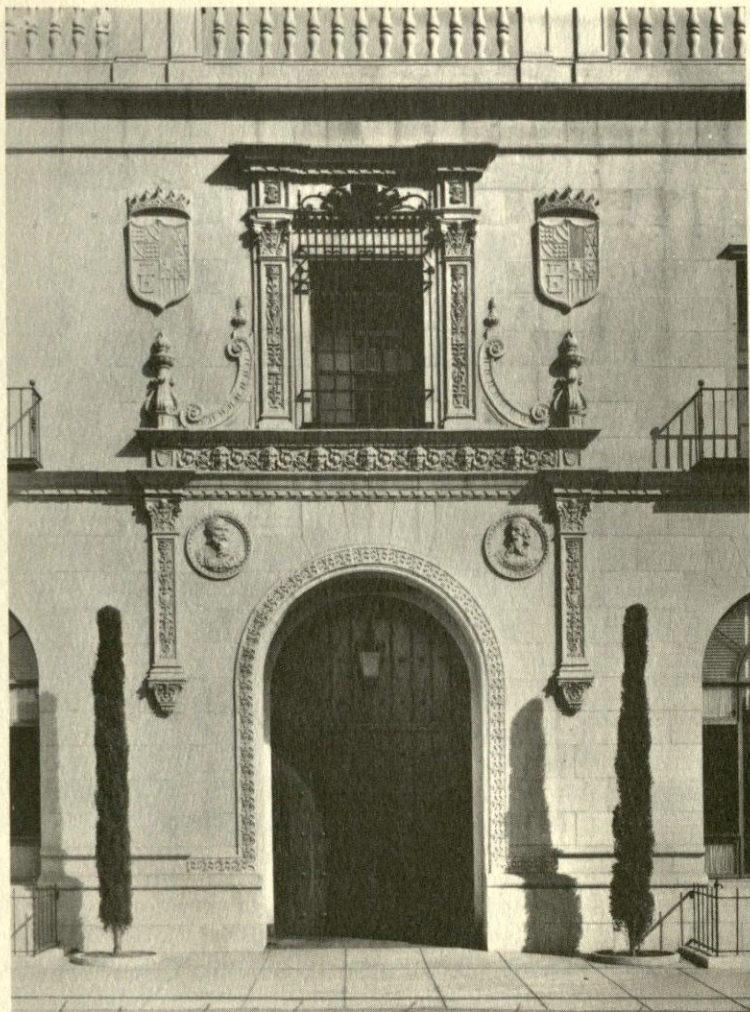


1928: The company flag flies bravely from the new Santa Barbara Telephone Company Building at the southeast corner of Chapala and Canon Perdido Streets. A third story was added later.

*Santa Barbara News-Press*

In 1939 the company merged with the Associated (later the General) Telephone Company, Easton continuing to occupy his office on the ground floor at the Chapala-Canon Perdido Street corner and serving as a director of the General Company.





Reflecting the city's Spanish architectural revival, Robert and Ethel designed the main entrance of the new telephone building after a doorway of the Iglesia de San Justo, Salamanca, Spain.

*Santa Barbara News-Press*

Though thoroughly part of Santa Barbara affairs, Easton was still deeply involved in the north county. In 1941 the Santa Maria Gas Company, which he now headed, merged with the Southern Counties Gas Company of which he became a director. Meanwhile also in Santa Maria he was managing the Santa Maria Realty Company, including 928 acres of farm land near Garey in the upper Valley, as well as business and residential properties in Santa Maria, developing the particularly attractive "Camino Colegio" residential tract with Spanish street names just east of the high school. And in San Francisco, which he visited regularly, he had been since 1922 a director of the Crocker First National Bank, which gave him statewide as well as local perspective.



One of his reasons for establishing a residence in Santa Barbara in 1927 was to be president of the local branch of the Pacific-Southwest Trust & Savings Bank, later the Security Pacific National Bank, but the promised position failed to materialize due to personnel changes in the bank's Los Angeles headquarters.



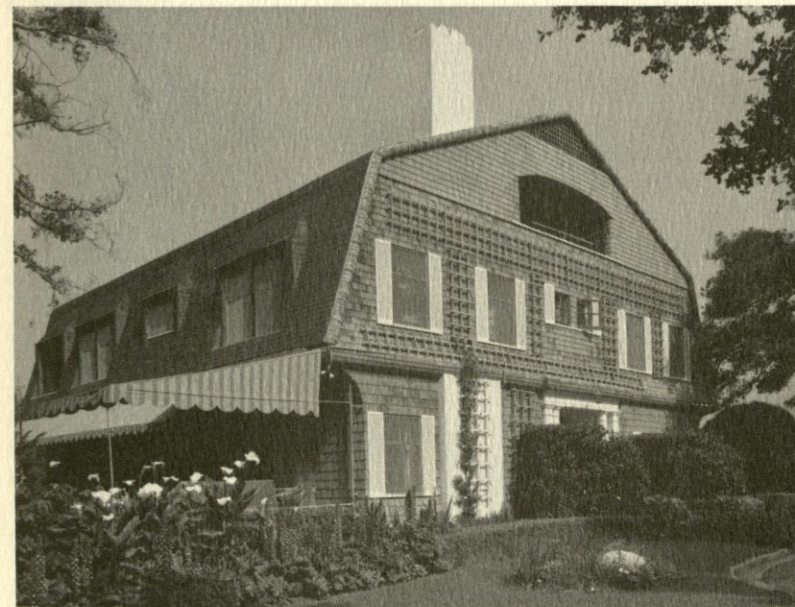
Old homestead: the William H. Tunnell house, built in the 1890s, was later used as a back-country camp by Sisquoc Ranch vaqueros.

### Community Service

Concurrently with these varied business activities Easton engaged in or helped support a variety of community activities. He served as trustee of the Santa Maria High School, was active in youth groups in Santa Maria and Santa Barbara, became a founding member and later president of the Santa Barbara Foundation, helped organize the Santa Maria Community Orchestra in which he played the flute, served twelve years on the board of the Santa Barbara Public Library and nearly as many on the Memorial Cancer Foundation Board, became a thirty-five-year board member and several times chairman of the Santa Barbara Community Arts Music Association which arranged annual concerts by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. He said he considered such activities as a civic obligation as well as a pleasure.

He also arranged for the purchase by the county of the old post office, now the Museum of Art, and of the Lobero Theater Building, and was active in the preservation of the Foxen Canyon Church (San Ramón Chapel) and its eventual dedication as a historical landmark.

### "MR. SANTA BARBARA COUNTY"



The Easton residence at 2442 Garden St., Santa Barbara, was, and probably remains today, the area's only Eastern Shingle style building in Dutch Colonial tradition. Originally the Hersey house, it was built in 1914. Wayne McCall-Capra Press

For his work as an Episcopal layman he received an honorary degree from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific at Berkeley, serving as one of its trustees for a number of years.

In addition to lodge and other affiliations, he had become a member of the exclusive Pacific Union Club of San Francisco and the elite Society of Los Alamos, composed of forty-nine Santa Barbara County ranch owners or those with close ties to its ranching traditions, but maintained a wide friendship and acquaintanceship among all levels of society, including farm and ranch hands he'd known intimately in earlier days.

### "Mr. Santa Barbara County"

Few knew the full scope and variety of Easton's activities. One who did was his close friend and political associate Leo Preisker of Santa Maria, a member of the County Board of Supervisors from 1915 to 1943, chairman from 1925 to 1943, who liked to refer to him privately as "Mr. Santa Barbara County." A leading candidate himself for that informal title, Preisker persuaded Easton, during the Depression, to accept chairmanship of the county's first committee on low-rent housing. Thanks largely to its efforts, low-rent housing was secured for Santa Maria and Lompoc but declined in Santa Barbara.

Working together for more than a quarter-century, Easton and Preisker frequently provided a counterforce to the growing power of Thomas Storke, publisher of the *Santa Barbara Daily News* and later the *New Press*. Sometimes at odds, sometimes cooperating, Storke and Easton finally buried the hatchet at a party at the Santa Barbara Club honoring





Ninetieth birthday party: T.M. Storke's newsboy presents Easton with a "special edition" of the *News-Press* while friends including Reuben Irvin (center left) and Joe Callahan (far right) look on.

*S.B. News-Press*

Easton on his 90th birthday, when Storke (aged 89) distributed to guests a surprise "special edition" of the *News-Press* featuring his old friend and adversary on its front page.

### Conservationist

As a conservationist Easton was a pioneer in water development, advocating measures which led to such projects as the Twitchell and Cachuma reservoirs. He received national recognition from the 1930s forward, culminating in a feature article in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1951, for his work in preserving the California condor. He served as the Board of Supervisor's representative on the Santa Barbara National Forest Advisory Committee and also chairmanned the forest Grazing Committee. But it was from his own convictions about wilderness and wildlife, that he successfully opposed road construction in the heart of the back country—in what would become the San Rafael Wilderness of Los Padres National Forest—and at the same time (1937) led in establishing the Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary, the first of its kind.

In addition to his Sisquoc Ranch interests, Easton acquired also in 1937, the Zaca Mesa Ranch in Foxen Canyon and, a few years later, the Zaca Laderas Ranch on Figueroa Mountain Road, thus taking a deeper root in a county he liked to describe as "the most beautiful place in the world."

His annual barbeque at the Sisquoc became a countywide tradition. Under the shade of giant pepper trees a pit was dug and a bed of oak coals prepared for the roasting of delicious steaks. Guests came from the Santa



Maria, Los Alamos and Santa Ynez Valleys as well as Santa Barbara. As one of them, Colonel Joseph Barnard, described it: "The barbecue was preceded by the celebration of High Mass in the Sisquoc [Foxen Canyon] Church. It was always a notable affair. The church is simple and austere to a degree, though of the dignity that always sets such edifices apart. The service was presented with all the color and splendor of the age-old ritual, the beauty and solemnity of which was added to by the fresh young voices of the [brown-robed Franciscan] choir of Saint Anthony's Seminary in Santa Barbara. Following the Mass, memorial services were held at Foxen's grave in the churchyard, and then everyone went to the ranch house for the barbecue. This was in the best tradition of open-handed, heart-warming California hospitality. Appropriate to the occasion there were [demonstrations of horsemanship by native vaqueros, music by violin and guitar, and] many eloquent expressions of gratitude to General Fremont and Benjamin Foxen for the happy outcome of what might have been a tragic event on that memorable December day in 1846 [December 28, date of Fremont's victorious arrival in Santa Barbara during the war with Mexico, after receiving hospitality and advice from Foxen at his Foxen Canyon ranch]."

When the Sisquoc Ranch, of which he was by now co-owner, passed into other hands in the 1950s, Easton presented its original U.S. patent, one of the few such documents to survive the years, to the Santa Barbara Historical Society, along with other memorabilia. At about this time he helped foster development of the Santa Maria Valley Historical Society and made oral tapes for it from his reminiscences, and also achieved authorship by writing articles on Don Gaspar O'reña and Judge Robert B. Canfield for *Noticias*, at the request of its editor, his friend Selden Spaulding.



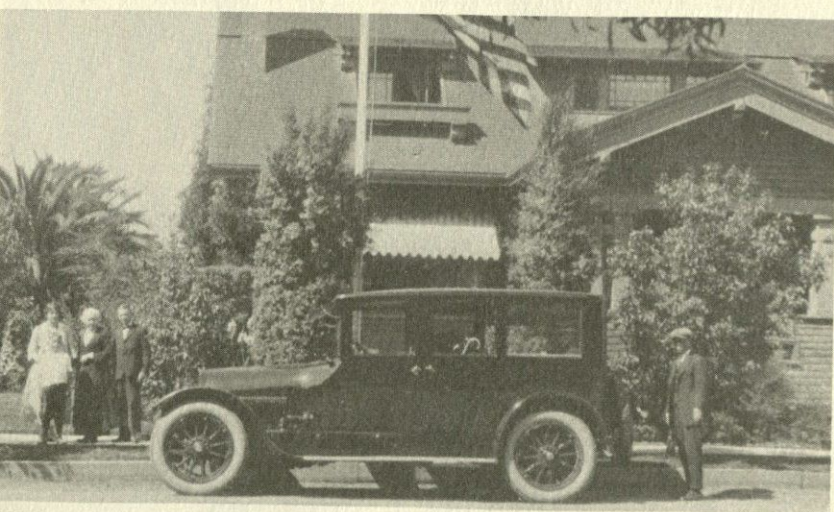
Santa Barbara Fiesta, 1929: With Ethel (left) and Captain and Mrs. G. Allan Hancock from Santa Maria (right).





With Ethel and son Bob, Christmas 1916.

Sidney Webb



0 Broadway, Santa Maria, 1923. Easton stands with Ethel, Bob, and his mother-in-law, Mrs. Warren Olney. Flag was raised on patriotic holidays and when guests were expected.



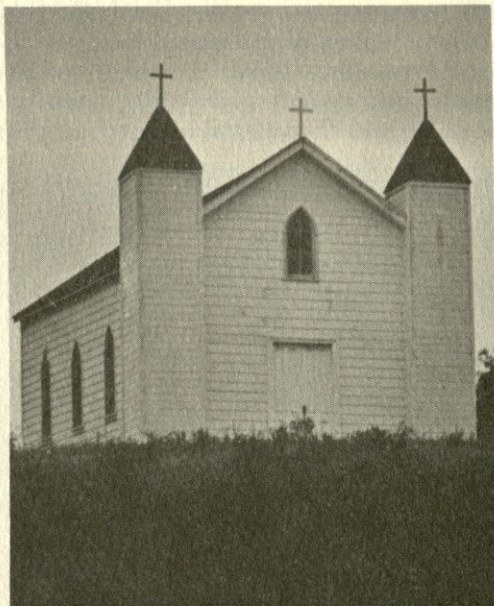


Dec. 2, 1947: With Ethel at the Fox Arlington Theater for opening night of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra 1947-48 concert series, Albert Wallenstein conducting.

*Santa Barbara News-Press*



Remains of fireplace, H.P. Wells homestead.  
Dick Smith



The Sisquoc or Foxen Canyon Church. Built in 1870s, its original name was San Ramón Chapel.

Dick Smith



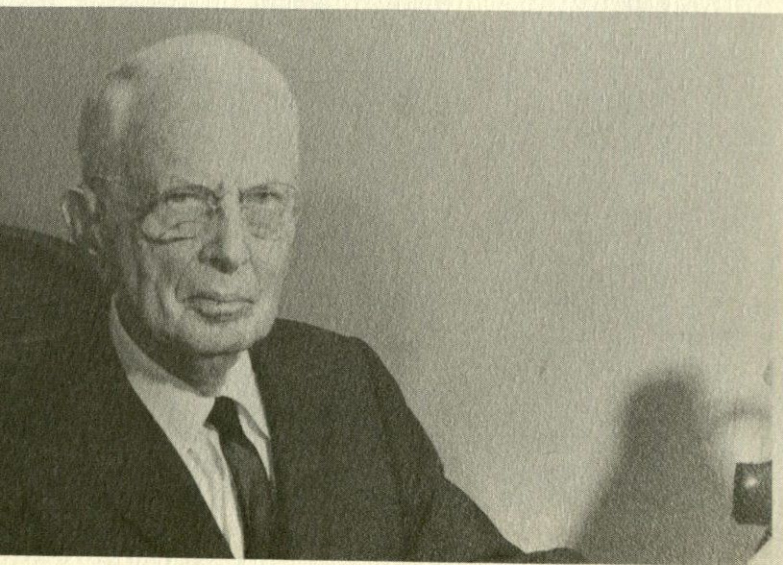
### Long Life and Good Health

ston attributed his long productive life and good health to "keeping g." He rose every morning before six, earlier if necessary, and "kept g" until six p.m. or later. His habit was to eat lightly and go to bed at nine o'clock.

For more than twenty years he maintained two residences and commuted regularly between Santa Barbara and Santa Maria, spending the first two of each week in his Santa Maria office, and the next three in Santa Barbara, also visiting Lompoc, Los Olivos, Buellton, Guadalupe, Ang, or Goleta as occasion required. Weekends or sometimes parts of days were spent at his ranches, as he crisscrossed the county wearing various "hats" as businessman, rancher, or community activist. Aside from seasonal vacations in the Sierras or the redwoods of northern California, camping trips in his beloved back country, he was in his offices, on the road, between, or at meetings in Los Angeles or San Francisco, every day and often on weekends. His wife and son sometimes called him "invisible man," yet he found time to be a devoted husband and father despite his hectic schedule.

He considered it moral weakness to complain of tiredness, hunger, or physical ailment. Life was too inviting and too demanding to be taken any way but with total commitment and stiff upper lip. Deeply religious, he believed in human progress, material and spiritual. Though unyielding and tightfisted in his business dealings, his charitable gifts were numerous and generous, and often secret.

When he died after a brief illness on December 3, 1968 at age 93, the *Santa Barbara Press* editorialized: "Few men lead lives of such breadth and depth. Few are able to make such lasting contributions to their fellow men . . . Santa Barbara County has lost one of its greatest citizens."



at the General Telephone Company, Santa Barbara, age 80.



# SAVING THE CONDOR:

## Robert E. Easton's Fight to Create The Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary

By Ray Ford\*

On Friday, June 29, 1934, a light breeze stirred along the slopes of the Sierra Madre Mountains in northern Santa Barbara County, providing the characteristic currents which made them the primary flyway of the California condor. The cavalcade of friends, which included Robert E. Easton and his son Bob, proceeded slowly up the steep, angular trail by horseback.

Anticipation rose with the gain in elevation. The miles seemed to drag on, but then suddenly, a high grassy ridge could be seen out of which rose rounded masses of weather-sculptured sandstone. Circling above were the large dark birds.

### Montgomery Potrero

There were nine people on the expedition brought together by the senior Easton, then secretary and manager of the Sisquoc Investment Company, which owned this 40-acre parcel of meadow and sandstone outcropping known as Montgomery Potrero. They were gathered for what one of the participants described as "the expression of a generous act of hospitality on the part of [Easton], extending to [his] guests the rare privilege which [he himself] had enjoyed in the past, of seeing condors at close range in their native habitat."<sup>1</sup>

At the time Robert Easton was nearing his 59th birthday, an age when most men would be entertaining dreams of retirement, but this tough, wiry Santa Barbara County rancher, businessman, and ardent conservationist was about to engage upon what I consider to be the landmark achievement in his life—the fight to save the condor through the establishment of a sanctuary deep in the heart of this wild region.

Three days prior to the trip, son Bob and Lamar Johnston, son of Eugene L. Johnston, a neighboring rancher, prepared a blind from which to view the condors with as little disturbance as possible. A hundred yards from the blind they placed the carcass of an old ranch horse as bait for the carrion-eating condors, carefully locating it for photographic purposes. It had worked. A half-mile short of the blind, Easton, disarmed by the rare display before him, his attention drawn to the cloud of birds milling about in the air above the bait, motioned to the party to stop.

"Across, and around, and in and out of the circling mass of lesser birds: crows, ravens, and turkey vultures, we descried greater forms gliding steadily and majestically in wider and unwavering orbits," Ernest Dyer, an ornithologist and retired Union Oil chemical engineer later wrote in an

\*Ray Ford, a graduate of UCSB, is now a lecturer in the Department of Environmental Studies there. He has been a teacher of Social Studies at Dos Pueblos High School for 19 years. He is the author of *Day Hikes in the Santa Barbara Foothills*.

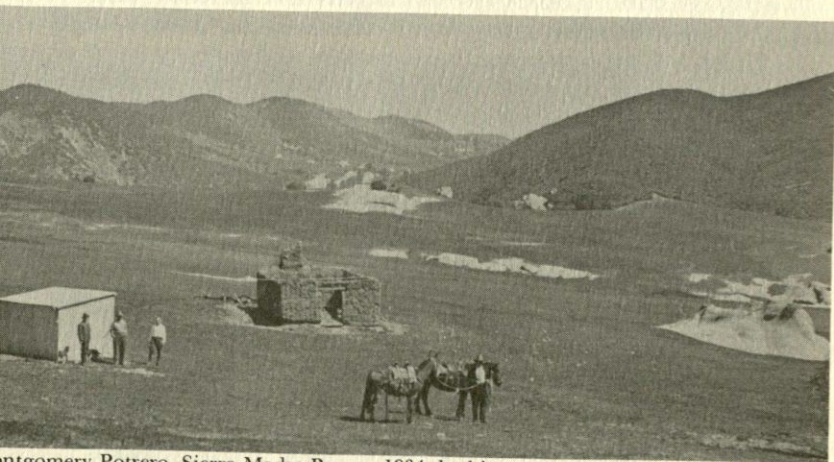
1. Ernest Dyer, "Meeting the Condor On His Own Ground," *The Condor*, January-February, 1935, page 5.



article for the Cooper Ornithological Society. During the trip he was also to produce the first motion pictures ever taken of the condor. "[It was at this moment we] realized that we were, at last, beholding a portion—too large a portion—of the pitiful remnant of that great race that once ranged, even in prehistoric times, from Baja California on the south, northward through the full length of Alta California up into Oregon and Washington, perhaps even further," Dyer added.<sup>2</sup>

Dismounting in a hollow beneath a cluster of live oak and conifer to hide their presence, peering cautiously over its rim, Easton and Dyer were met with what seemed a reception committee, as three condors detached from the whirling assemblage and sailed grandly overhead, eyeing the strangers keenly. The birds passed so closely that there was no difficulty in seeing their enormous size—nearly ten feet in wingspread and twenty-five pounds in body weight. The white patches under the wings of the two adults, as well as the lack of them on the third, a juvenile, indicated the condors' nesting area might indeed be nearby.

"We have seen the condors and they have presented a spectacle that I could not have missed for anything," Easton whispered in quiet amazement. Interspersed with the wonder of this sight was also a certain sadness, for he guessed that he might be viewing seventy per cent—perhaps even one hundred per cent—of all California condors left in existence. In fact, a leading expert, Dr. Alexander Wetmore of the Smithsonian Institution, had estimated there were no more than ten condors still surviving and the species was doomed.<sup>3</sup> Within Easton a conviction grew—a feeling that something must be done to save this magnificent species.



Montgomery Potrero, Sierra Madre Range, 1934, looking east toward Pine Corral Potrero, showing Sisquoc Ranch Company's storage shed and remains of Josiah T. Montgomery's adobe.

ibid., page 6.

Dick Smith and Robert Easton, *California Condor: Vanishing American*, McNally and Martin, 1964, page 87.





Immature condor, Montgomery Potrero, 1934.

Kathleen Dougan

### Unwanted Publicity

Though members of the expedition agreed the best course of action was to keep publicity to a minimum—and thus protect the rare condors and their habitat—the excitement caused by the discovery of sixteen of them could not be kept quiet. On July 5 an article describing the trip appeared in the *Santa Maria Times*, and on July 6, one in the *Los Angeles Times*. The latter, featuring a large picture of a condor, was extremely disturbing, not only because it gave the approximate location of the sightings, but showed the condor in the act of carrying off a small fawn, a completely erroneous portrait of condor behavior.<sup>4</sup>

Firing off a letter to Ernest Dyer the same day, Easton expressed his displeasure with the article, wondering how the *Times* had secured the information. But he concluded to Dyer, with the damage already done, "My experience has been that it is best to give them the correct information rather than having a garbled report go out [as was the case with the *Times*]."<sup>5</sup> Dyer agreed, and as a result he wrote the article for the Cooper Ornithological Society describing the trip in detail and the desperate plight of the California condor.

4. In the *Times* article the caption under the drawing says the following: "This drawing by *Times* Staff Artist Bernard Garbutt shows how a California condor is capable of carrying a fawn in its talons."

5. Letter from Robert Easton to Ernest Dyer, July 6, 1934.



"As to their future prospects," Dyer wrote, staking out the position he and Easton had decided was crucial to the condors' salvation. "The trend of their past history undeniably points to their ultimate extinction unless conservation measures are promptly put into effect."<sup>6</sup> To both of them that meant not only protecting the birds from careless hunters and egg collectors, but providing them a sanctuary where they nested.

While Dyer was putting his effort into the article, Easton began to contact a variety of authorities to see what could be done to assure protection from human destruction. "Will you kindly verify our position that there are game laws protecting these birds?" he wrote to the California Fish and Game Commission. "I suggest that a special bill be prepared for the protection of the few remaining birds," he concluded.<sup>7</sup>

"Condors are protected in California under Section 1172 of the Fish and Game code," a spokesman for the commission replied, "and we believe the present law is sufficient to take care of any [complaints] which might come up in the future."<sup>8</sup> Easton, however, was not convinced. His experience with irresponsible hunters and others with little regard for wildlife or wilderness values had helped him to decide to close the road through the Sisquoc Ranch in the not-too-distant past.

"I am really more afraid of these d--d egg-hounds than I am of the hunters," Dyer said in response to Easton's concerns. "I suspect that \$1,000 would be paid gladly by some oologists."<sup>9</sup> Easton agreed egg hunting was a major problem. When he first came to the ranch he had occasionally seen condors, though already rare in the early 1900s, and had known of high school boys stealing their eggs to sell for ten dollars each.

But unable to gain the support of the Fish and Game Commission, Easton and Dyer decided the next step might be to work towards the extension of the Manzanita Game Refuge to include Sisquoc Falls, which bordered but did not include the Falls, believed by them to be the condors' central nesting and roosting site. Because this habitat was within the Santa Barbara National Forest boundary,<sup>10</sup> Easton sought the help of the forest supervisor, S.A. Nash-Boulden.

### **Forest Service Concern for Fire Protection**

Dealing with the Forest Service proved to be very difficult and frustrating. On the one hand, both Nash-Boulden and his deputy supervisor, Cyril Robinson, were sympathetic toward the plight of the condor; on the other, Nash-Boulden was determined that nothing should interfere with one of his primary responsibilities—the suppression of wildfires.

There was good reason to be concerned about wildfire. The period from 1920 to 1929 proved to be the largest decade for fire in California history, a total of 495,845 acres burning,<sup>11</sup> nearly one-third of the entire southern

6. Ernest Dyer, "Meeting the Condor On Its Own Ground," page 11.

7. Letter from Robert Easton to Fish and Game Commission, January 4, 1935.

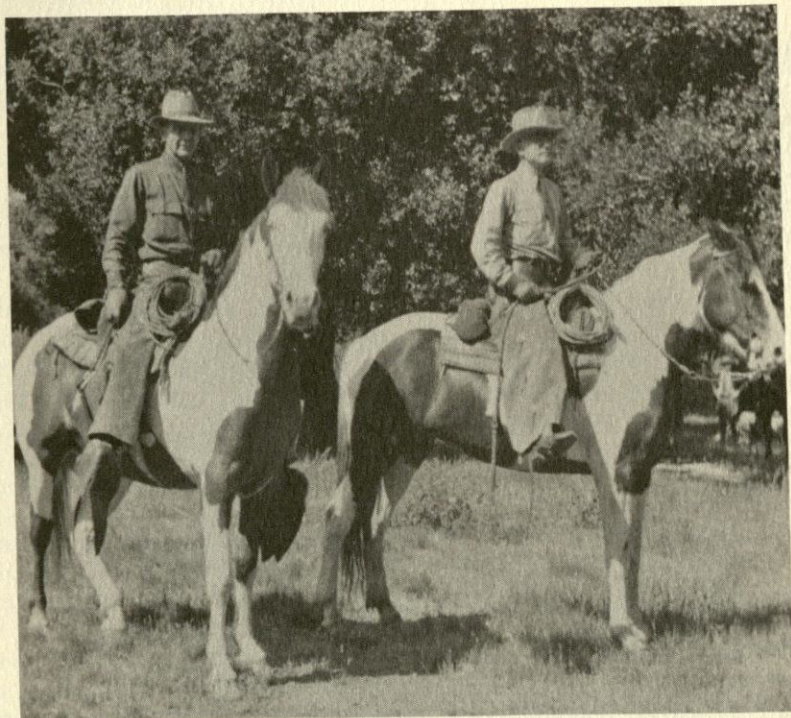
8. Letter from E.L. Macaulay, January 9, 1935.

9. Apparently a Boy Scout Master in the Fillmore area had taken his troop on a condor egg hunt in hopes of collecting a \$1,000 reward. Egg hunting has been cited as one of the major causes in the decline of the condor.

10. The Santa Barbara National Forest became the Los Padres National Forest in 1938.

11. The average acreage burned per year in the 1920s was 48,200, a 320% increase over the period from 1910-1919.





Santa Barbara (later Los Padres) National Forest Supervisor S.A. Nash-Boulden (left) and Deputy Supervisor C.S. Robinson helped establish the Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary. U.S. Forest Service

portion of the forest. Then on September 7, 1932, the Matilija Fire broke out, scorching some 219,254 acres. Not only was this the largest single fire in California history, but it burned into the upper Santa Ynez watershed, the location of the newly-constructed Gibraltar Reservoir. Santa Barbara citizens demanded better protection.<sup>12</sup>

The key to successful fire fighting in the 1930s was considered to be "attack time," the amount of time between a fire starting and personnel arriving on the scene to fight it. Attack time averaged a relatively slow 3.5 hours in the 1920s. While the addition of lookout towers in the back country made spotting fires easier, and bulldozers and the introduction of the first mountain fire trucks in 1928 helped speed response time, the most important ingredient in the reduction of attack time was access—and to Nash-Boulden that meant the construction of more roads.

During the Depression years back country road building reached its apex with the appearance in Southern California of thousands of young members of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Using CCC manpower, Nash-Boulden made plans to grid the forest with dirt roads that would leave no spot more than a mile from vehicular access. The first of these roads, known as the Buckhorn Road, was built by the CCC over Big Pine Mountain, connecting the upper Santa Ynez Valley to the Cuyama Valley.

12. A number of articles in the Santa Barbara newspapers stressed the need for better access into the back country, especially the upper Santa Ynez drainages. Besides the Matilija fire, a major wildfire had destroyed much of the Indian Creek watershed in the 1920s.



When Robert Easton learned that a second road had been started on Manzana Creek (near what is now the location of Nira Campground), with the intention of being routed over Hurricane Deck and up the Sisquoc River, stopping its construction rather than extending the boundaries of the game refuge became his main priority. If built, it would pass within a half-mile of Sisquoc Falls, and hopes of saving the condor would be severely jeopardized. He, Dyer, and Bob began a vigorous campaign to halt the road building, already proceeding up Lost Valley towards the Deck.

### A Sense of Direction

Support, and a sense of direction, came from an unexpected, and extremely welcome source when E.A. Stoner of the Audubon Society sent a letter to the Sisquoc Ranch requesting more information about the discovery of the large numbers of condors in the Santa Barbara backcountry since he had been led to believe them to be practically extinct in California.<sup>13</sup>

"Could you advise whether the men on your ranch are sympathetic towards this bird and willing or desirous of protecting them?" Stoner asked with a hint of nervousness, the result of previous experiences with ranchers. Discovering to his delight that, in Easton, he could not have found a more enthusiastic or energetic ally, Stoner quickly brought the National Audubon Society into the fight to save the condor.

Warren Eaton, Executive Secretary for Audubon, contacted Easton soon thereafter. "It is incumbent upon our Association and our friends in California to draw up a definite program," he explained, "so we can find out how many birds there are, where they are, and what proper means can be taken to protect them."<sup>14</sup> At Easton's suggestion Dyer was appointed Audubon's west coast field representative for condor protection, thus ensuring local control of the effort would continue. In addition, son Bob began to assume a more important role since, as a student at Harvard, he was nearer Audubon headquarters and in direct touch with Eaton and Dyer.

Dyer's field work confirmed an opinion that he and Easton had shared—that the major condor nesting and roosting area appeared to be Sisquoc Falls. "If this is not a nesting place of the birds," Dyer wrote in his journal while observing them from June 26 to July 3, 1935, "there seems to be no question whatsoever, not only from my present observation, but from those in preceding years, this is at least a sanctuary . . ."<sup>15</sup>

To Easton's and Dyer's satisfaction, the importance of Sisquoc Falls to the condor had been proved, as well as the need for stopping the road before it encroached on condor habitat. Still, they needed to convince the Forest Service. While the elder Easton approached Nash-Boulden, Bob contacted Warren Eaton at the Audubon headquarters in New York, who he hoped would exert influence on Forest Service officials in Washington.

Letter from E.A. Stoner to George Begg, Superintendent of the Sisquoc Ranch, December 34.

Letter from Warren Eaton to Robert Easton, March 20, 1935.

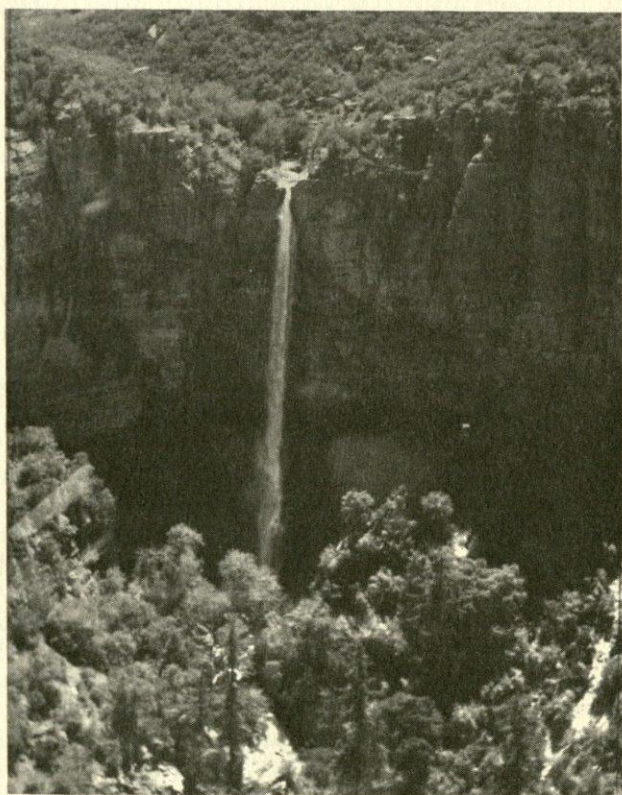
Journal of Ernest Dyer, July 2, 1935.



"There appears one vital fact in regard to the subject of *more adequate protection*," he explained to Eaton. "The construction of Forest Roads must cease . . . these roads enable the public to gain access to this hitherto remote region, which can have but one effect on the condors . . . We strongly advise that the Audubon Society, either directly or through Washington, D.C., bring immediate pressure to bear on the authorities to stop all road construction in the area outlined."<sup>16</sup>

Despite the pressure, Nash-Boulden remained unconvinced. "It does not seem possible that this can be done," he wrote to Audubon. "This proposed river road . . . up the Sisquoc is a key road in that any alteration from its present route would seriously affect our planned hourly method of fire suppression."<sup>17</sup>

The reply received several months later from the Chief of the Forest Service in Washington, F.A. Silcox, made their cause seem even more hopeless. "In connection with the maintenance of primitive conditions," he reminded them, "it is the feeling . . . that we must choose between the



Sisquoc Falls in the Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary.

16. Letter from Bob Easton to Warren Eaton, July 9, 1935.

17. Letter from Nash-Boulden to Warren Eaton, September 18, 1935.



separation by fire and that of a minimum amount of protection roads. [I would rather] accept a reasonable invasion of primitive areas . . . than run the risk of total devastation by fire."<sup>18</sup>

John Baker, now the Executive Secretary of Audubon after the sudden death of Warren Eaton, nevertheless kept up the pressure on the Chief Forester, and four months later he reported good news. "Silcox will go along . . . in our desires," he wrote to Easton in February, 1936, a year-and-a-half after the fight had begun, "provided that he is not forced in doing so to override [Nash-Boulden] in a way to develop antagonism toward him."<sup>19</sup> Then Easton knew that if there was going to be a sanctuary for the condor he was going to have to change the mind of the forest supervisor.

### Convincing the Forest Supervisor

Rather than approaching Nash-Boulden directly, he began to play upon the sympathies of the deputy supervisor, Robinson, who he knew was very sympathetic to the cause of the condor. A naturalist by inclination, Robinson had already experienced the awesome beauty of the condor in the field on a number of trips in the Big Pine area. Convincing Robinson to accompany him on a trip up the Sisquoc to see the nesting and roosting habits that Dyer had observed, Easton hoped to impress upon the deputy supervisor the importance of the area as a potential sanctuary. The trip was successful.

With Robinson's support assured, Easton once again approached Nash-Boulden. "At least stop building the Hurricane Deck Road until we can look at all the alternatives," he suggested diplomatically. "Why not send a team of field observers into the back country to see where the condors are actually nesting before you continue construction?"

Then Easton offered a suggestion that he hoped would make the compromise much easier to accept. "I think the Sisquoc Ranch would give us a right of way through our land at Montgomery Potrero for your planned road along the Sierra Madre Ridge if the Hurricane Deck Road were stopped. Why not see if this fire access is sufficient without one up the Sisquoc?"<sup>20</sup>

A temporary halt to construction of the Hurricane Deck Road occurred briefly in 1936 as a result, but with the understanding that a final decision would be made by Fall as to its continuance. In May, two observers were sent into the back country—John Jakes at Squaw Flat in Ventura County, and Walter Maples at Sisquoc Falls. The Forest Service put up two-thirds of the \$300 cost of the surveys; Easton and Dyer chipped in the other third. Maples' observations on Wednesday, May 20, alone, confirmed the importance of the Falls to the condor. "Sisquoc Falls colony maximum of 10 birds in the air at 12:20 p.m. Seem to be bathing and playing," he noted. "On the left-hand slope of falls looking into nests. Three birds in three different nests . . . seven birds within 75 feet of me."<sup>21</sup>

On June 22 Nash-Boulden, in the company of Robinson, visited the falls and confirmed the accuracy of the field observations. In the process he

Letter from F.A. Silcox to Warren Eaton, November 8, 1935.

Letter from John Baker to Robert Easton, February 20, 1936.

Personal communication from Bob Easton, September 9, 1986.

Walter Maples, *Field Notes*, while stationed at the South Fork of the Sisquoc River from May 18 to May 29, 1936.



also became convinced the Hurricane Deck Road would endanger the condors' habitat and that adequate fire protection could be achieved by the Buckhorn and Sierra Madre Ridge roads alone. Easton and Nash-Boulden then developed an informal understanding. The forest supervisor agreed to discontinue construction of the Hurricane Deck Road and in exchange Easton granted a right of way through the forty acres at Montgomery Potrero owned by the Sisquoc Ranch.

Attention was then turned to the creation of a sanctuary. This proved more time consuming since an order establishing it was needed from the highest possible authority. "The higher up we go initially in its issuance, the more difficult it will be to retract," John Baker advised Easton.<sup>22</sup> Together they decided to make sure the proclamation was signed by the Secretary of Agriculture, eliminating any possibility of a change in policy at lower levels.

On New Year's, 1937, thirty-seven years to the day Robert Easton rode his horse across the eastern part of the Santa Maria Valley to take charge of the Sisquoc Ranch, the 1200-acre Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary officially came into existence, due in large part to his perseverance.

### A County Legacy

In 1939 an Audubon Fellowship was established at the University of California for the purpose of supporting research on the natural history of the California condor. Just over a decade later the Fellowship supported the research of wildlife biologist Carl Koford which helped lead to the creation of a second reserve, the Sespe Condor Sanctuary.<sup>23</sup>

In 1953, after extensive field studies in the back country of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, Koford estimated that there were still forty to sixty condors left in the wild. Today there may be as few as three. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in charge of the Condor Recovery Program, has received approval to bring these into what they term "protective custody" until they are able to begin releasing those now at the Los Angeles County Zoo and San Diego Wild Animal Park which have been raised through the Captive Breeding Program.

Without a viable habitat, the chances for the program's success will be slim. But thanks to Easton's unceasing efforts, vital nesting and roosting areas will be assured, deep in the heart of the back country.

Tough, determined, dedicated, Robert Easton accomplished an incredible amount in his lifetime. "But he wasn't a saint," Bob replied, when I asked him to describe his father, "just a hard-headed businessman with a civic consciousness and a sense of responsibility."<sup>24</sup>

What I will remember most is a man who had a deeply-felt love for the land, the land he often called the most beautiful in America—a love that embraced all its inhabitants, including the California condor.

22. Letter from John Baker to Robert Easton, December 19, 1936.

23. Carl Koford, *The California Condor*, National Audubon Society, 1953.

24. Personal communication from Bob Easton, June 10, 1986.